

Hh. 1031

REFLECTIONS  
Upon what the  
**WORLD**  
Commonly call  
**GOOD-LUCK**  
AND  
**ILL-LUCK,**  
With Regard to  
**LOTTERIES.**



And of the Good Use which may be  
made of them.

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By Monsieur Le Clerk.

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THE  
PREFACE.

**T**H E following Treatise falls in so exactly with the prevailing Humour of the Times , that a Man need go no farther than the Title-Page to convince himself of its being seasonable. And the Argument handled in it is so ingeniously managed, that nothing needs be said here

A to

## *The Preface.*

to prove it useful. The Happiness of Mankind, with regard to the Accidents and Affairs of the present Life, depends in a great measure upon the Notions they entertain of the several Events which happen to them, and the Disposition of those Events. They who suffer themselves to be carried away with false and fantastical Opinions in this Matter, slide insensibly into all the Whimsies and disquieting Terrors of Superstition ; A Disease exceeding com-

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common, bred up and she-  
rished by early Prejudices;  
and though incident chie-  
fly to weak Minds, yet  
very rarely rooted out  
entirely by the strongest.  
The Consequences of this  
Evil are the more to be  
dreaded, not only upon  
the account of that Ty-  
ranny and Torture which  
it exercises upon them who  
live in Bondage to it; but  
likewise with regard to the  
great and manifest Obstru-  
ction, which it puts upon  
the wisest, justest, and most  
commendable Designs. For

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## *The Preface.*

how often do we see these suspended, or wholly laid aside, how many happy Opportunities are neglected and lost, upon a childish regard to *Omens*, and *Days*, and *Persons*, which are vulgarly believed inauspicious and unfortunate? This is so Epidemical a Folly, that never a one of my Readers, I dare say, hath not found it fall within the Compass of his own Observation. And yet not one of them neither, can account to himself, for the Rise and Progress of it in the

## The Preface.

the World. St. *Au-*  
*gustine*, and other  
eminent Writers in the  
Church, have exposed  
these Fopperies as they  
deserve, by representing  
them to be some of those  
Delusions, into which Al-  
mighty God suffered the  
old Pagans to fall; Thus  
punishing their affected,  
with a judicial, Blind-  
ness. But we find plain-  
ly by *Tully* and Others,  
that even among the Pa-  
gans, Men of Judgment  
and better Sense detested  
and despised them, though

*De Doct.  
Christ.*

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the Corruptions of their Worship gave so much Countenance to them. And, if even with wise Heathens they were despicable, among Christians most certainly they are monstrous and abominable; unworthy of, and inconsistent with the Discoveries, which God in Scripture hath made of himself and his Dealings with Mankind. One cannot, without Indignation, hear Persons, who profess to Believe and Understand the Gospel, laying a Stress upon

*Fatal*

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*Fatal Numbers, Climacterical Years, Childermass Days, Lucky Hours, Successful Physicians, and a Hundred other such sensless Trifles, which are frequently not received only, but taken in as Principles to govern their Conduct by ; without any respect to natural or reasonable Causes of the good or ill Success attending these Things and Persons. For it is not in Matters of Diversion, in Gaming only, that these Fancies prevail, but even in the most important Affairs*

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of Humane Life : A Man hath earnest Business, and must not begin a Journey, or take the first Step in it: He is Sick, and may by no means Bleed or take a proper Medicine, because it is *Childermaſſ Day*; He needs Advice, and declines to ask it of one whom he verily believes more skilful, because another less so is more *lucky*; His Relation or Friend dies, and this must be imputed to his *being in such a fatal Year, or sitting Thirteen at Table*; as if Sixty

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Sixty three were more dangerous, than Seventy, or Seventy two; and it were more probable, that *one in Thirteen* should drop that Year, than one in Thirty. These silly Conceipts are guilty, in their Consequences, of fixing such odd Constructions up on the Divine Providence, and representing it so capricious, so partially fond or cruel, so unaccountable in its Dispensations of very great Moment, that no Man of common Sense would endure to have

A 5 him.

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himself so meanly thought of, as that he acts by such Measures. And therefore the Fathers of the Church inveigh severely against all the Follies of this kind as being not only irrational, but profane, and irreligious, and highly provoking to Almighty God.

How foreign soever these Instances mentioned here may seem to the Subject-matter of this Book, yet in regard all the Sorts of superstitious Imaginations proceed from one and the same

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same common Principle, I thought it expedient to warn my Reader, that the Arguments made use of by this Author against one *Species*, will with a very easie Application be accommodated to all the rest. For the Root of all this prodigious Vanity is a mistaken Apprehension of that Cause, which governs Us and our Events, attributing too little or too much to it, and resolving Things into blind Chance, fatal Necessity, or such a Providence, as we are  
plea-

## *The Preface.*

pleased to form to our selves, without modelling our Idea's by the Standard of Natural or Revealed Truths. Our Author hath sufficiently disproved and exposed the Absurdity of such Errours, and shewed how exceeding ridiculous, and perfectly groundless they are. But I thought it might not be amiss to add in this Preface, how extreamly injurious they are to that Wise Being, who disposes all our Affairs in due Order and Measure: and to put the

## *The Preface.*

the well-inclined Reader in mind , that by Indulging these Follies , he is not only guilty of a senseless and unwarrantable , but even of a sinful and impious Superstition, such as the Darkness of the Heathen Ignorance could scarce excuse , but the Light of Christianity is by all means bound to avoid and abhor.

Were there no other Benefit to be reaped from this Tract , than merely the contributing somewhat of use to our Minds at

## *The Preface.*

at large from this unreasonable Slavery , and assisting Men in framing juster Conceptions of God and Providence ; that alone would be sufficient to entitle it to good Acceptance and a very careful Perusal. But there is another indeed, no less seasonable, and necessary Advantage to be hoped for by it, The exciting Men, I mean, to Charity and Liberality to those in Want and Distress. A Virtue, for which we can never want Opportunities, because we  
*always*

## *The Preface.*

*always have, and always shall have the Poor with us, and whenever we will, we may do them good.* But the particular Circumstances of this Time and Nation cry at present more loudly than ordinary for Relief, and it will argue a very hard and unchristian Temper to be Deaf to their importunate Complaints. The general Calamities introduced by a long expensive War, have deprived many who are willing to get their Sustenance by hard Labour, of the Means of

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of supporting themselves and their indigent Families. And the vast Increase which some have found by being *fortunate* in Lotteries, put into their Hands the Power of doing much good at very small Ex- pence. If the Publick Au- thority do not here, as it does abroad, enjoyn a great Rebate of their Gains to be applied to Charitable Uses, yet the Gospel is a standing Law, and directs us all to make the Free- dom of our Distributions bear some decent Propor- tion

## *The Preface.*

tion to the Freedom of our Receipts. And every Man in this Point may and ought to be a Law to himself ; the more he is left at liberty by the Civil Constitution, the more generous and commendable is the good Man's choice ; and what is done of his own accord will be the more pleasing Sacrifice. This Argument is handled in some of the latter Chapters of this Book with great Address ; and, however selfish and worldly Men may be prejudiced against

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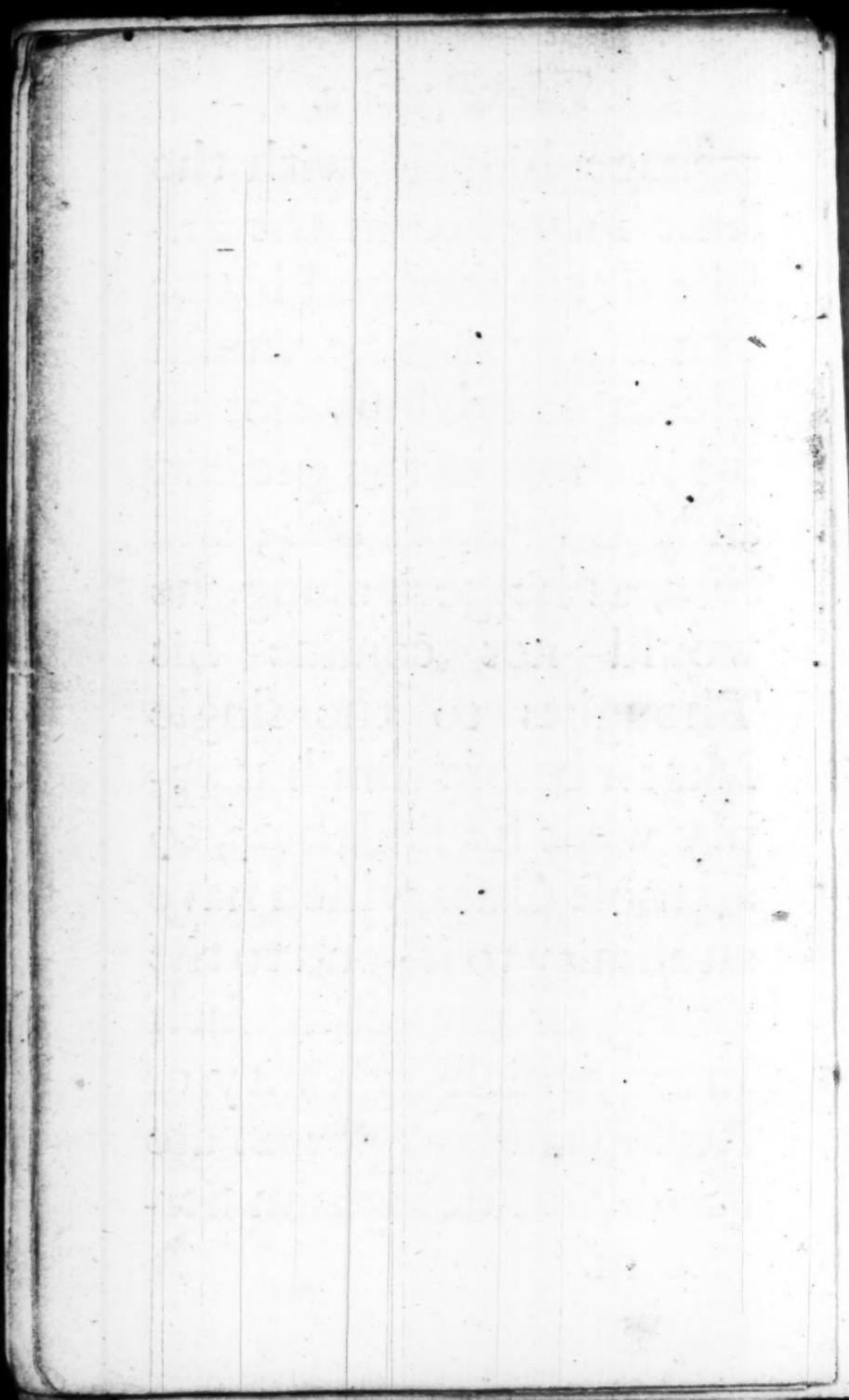
gainst those Reasons, which differ so much from common Practice, yet I conceive, upon serious consideration, it will not be easie for a good Christian, to evade the force of them.

I might add somewhat concerning that last Chapter drawn from the ingenious Mr. *Pascal*; which did Men rightly attend to, they could not suffer themselves to be so negligent and thoughtless in their greatest Concern. But I will detain my Reader no longer, than while I beg of him to manage

## *The Preface.*

manage himself with the same Prudence in the Affairs of another and better World, which he would esteem scandalous not to use in those of the present, and less valuable one ; and that, as he goes along, he would not confine his Thoughts to the single Matter before him, but apply what he finds here, to all those Cases, which have an affinity to it ; and to the curing or correcting such Errors, which by Parity of Reason, those *Arguments* are capable of doing him Service in.

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# REFLECTIONS UPON What the World Commonly call Good Luck and Ill Luck.

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## C H A P. I.

*The Occasion and Design of this little Trait. The Original of the Word Lot.*

**L**otteries were never so general a Subject of Discourse, as they have been of late, since that eminent one in *England* in the Year 1694. Their Neighbours, observing a *Million Sterling* speedily raised, in hopes of gaining some of the Great Benefits there proposed, have betaken themselves to the same Methods, of persuading People to part with ready Money, which no Consideration of any good Use to be made of it, would otherwise have been able to draw from them.

B

them. Several Cities in *Holland* and the Provinces adjacent, and even some little Towns have even rivalled one another in this Project; and many others it is said are like to be set on Foot, in places at a greater distance. The Few Persons, who have been Fortunate in the Lotteries already drawn, are so eager and full of Hope to grow Rich at a small Expence, in the many more proposed afresh, that every one hastens to bring in his Mony to those next to be drawn, with an Intention to venture all, or a considerable part of his Gains, in others to be drawn afterwards. This is observable to be constantly the Case, where Men are perswaded of the Integrity of the Directors; as in *Holland* particularly, where great Care and Exactness is used in matters of this kind. People are there as greedy of advancing Mony, as if they lent it at a large Interest; or put it out at the *Two-hundredth Penny*.

All *Holland* being now warm in these Projections, a Man comes into no Company, where these do not make a part of the Conversation; every one is expressing his Concern for his Loss, or his Joy for his Gain in Lotteries, or at least his Hopes of obtaining some Benefit, in those at present on Foot. The Lists that come out daily are greedily bought up, to see whether Mens Numbers are come up; A huge Roll of Cyphers are carefully perused, to observe whether there be any hopes yet left, or whether they must think of making

king themselves Amends in some future Lottery. If the *Numbers* lookt for are not yet past, they cherish Hopes of a good Benefit yet to come ; And though the Odds give more ground for Fear than Hope, yet every Man's Hopes are infinitely above his Fears. The first Question upon every Meeting is, *How Ticklers go ?* and every Moment we hear of the *Good Luck* of those who have *Benefits* ; and the *Ill Luck* of those that have only *Blanks*. Some there are that have succeeded in every Adventure, and these are called the *Fortunate*, they have the Opinion of great *Good Luck* attending them, and are often envied upon this Account. Others again, who have got nothing, lament their own *Ill Luck*, and declare that now finding themselves to be *Unfortunate*, they resolve never to venture in Lotteries any more.

I happened in Company lately to hear so much of This, that I could not forbear asking some who talked at this rate, Whether they understood what they said, when they affirmed a Man, to have *Good* or *Ill Luck*? This Question at first surprised them much, because no Expressions are more frequent than These, not only with regard to Lotteries, but all other Plays that depend upon Chance, and a Thousand other Incidents of Humane Life. However I took upon me to maintain, that these Words had no real Sense belonging to them, but were merely Terms of course, or at least very dark and unintelligible, in the Conception of most that used them. Upon

this the Discourse grew warm ; and They, who were surprised at my Question, maintained, that the Sense of these Words were exceeding obvious and clear , and that it was perfect Humour and Peevishness to cavil at them. The main Argument by which they supported themselves, was common Use, and Custom ; and the Instances of *Fortunate Persons* produced by them they thought sufficient, to confirm and warrant the Expressions which a customary Way of Speaking had established. Still I maintained the contrary, by such Arguments, as the Reader will find in the Sequel of this Work. What Success I met, or ought to have met with, I forbear to say, because it is more fit, that they, who peruse this Tract, should afterwards determine that Point, as They see reasonable.

This gave me the first Hint, and some Inclination to draw my Arguments into Form, and make them publick. I told them then, it were no hard matter to write a Book upon this Subject ; which might contain many Things, that deserve more serious Reflection , than Men commonly allow them. I communicated this Design afterwards to some Friends, who encouraged me to proceed in it ; and told me, that several vulgar Errours concerning things of this kind would never be more seasonably exposed than now. They perswaded me, that such a Tract could not cost me any great Pains ; and that a few Days would suffice for putting my Thoughts into Writing. They assured me far-

farther, that an Attempt of this Nature must needs turn to good Account, because falling in with the reigning Humour of the Time and the Country. At last I yielded, and resolved to let the World see, both my own Reasons, and the Objections they are liable to. But not intending so dry a Business as mere Criticism, I resolve to intersperse several things, which may both please and profit my Readers, if I can be so happy, as to make these Two Advantages meet together.

Now I will shew, that these two Words *Good Luck*, and *Ill Luck*, have in reality no Sense or Signification, as they are generally used, the different Manners whereof I will examine distinctly. I will likewise shew, that several other Words, as commonly received, both in Ancient and Modern Speech, are of a very loose, and uncertain Signification. After which, to proceed to somewhat of greater Consequence, I shall enquire into the Motives, by which Men are so commonly prevailed upon, to part with their Money so easily into *Lotteries*; and then in the last place, I will inform my Reader, what Use Men ought to make of the Advantage they reap from *Benefit Tickets*, or of the Losses they sustain by Blanks.

Thus I have laid down a short Scheme of my Design. But, before I enter upon Particulars, it will be proper to offer my Conjecture, concerning the Original of the Word *Lot*, from whence *Lottery* is derived. Now this seems to be an old *Saxon* word, as we

may probably conclude, from its being in use in most of the Languages in these Northern Parts of the World.

There is great reason to believe, that at the first Peopling of *Europe*, one and the same Nation of *Asia*, came along by the North of the *Euxin Sea*, and afterwards separated so, that one part, after having followed the Northern Coast of that Sea, turned Southward, and took up all that Tract of Land from *Thrace* to the utmost Southern Part of *Peloponnesus* and the *Morea*; and the other Division marched Westward, and inhabited *Germany*. The former were called *Greeks*, the latter *Germans*. Hence is that surprising Affinity, observable between the *Greek*, and *Saxon*, which was the ancient Language of the *Germans*; and from whence *High-Dutch*, *Low-Dutch*, and a great

*Meric. Casaub. Differt. de Ling. Saxon.* part of the English Tongue manifestly come. This is so fully made out by a Learned Man, in his Dissertation upon the *Saxon Tongue*; that I may take the liberty of supposing it upon this occasion, without troubling my self to prove it after him.

Upon these Terms, it ought not to seem Strange, if I derive the word *Lot* from the same Original, with the *Ionick* word  $\lambda\alpha\gamma\chi\nu$ ; which *Hesychius* and the *Great Etymologicon* declare to signify the same thing. Thence comes  $\lambda\alpha\gamma\chi\omega$  to have a *Lot*, instead whereof, now grown obsolete, the *Greek* makes use of  $\lambda\alpha\gamma\chi\alpha\rho\omega$ . It may perhaps be objected, that were the

*Greek*

Greek Word λοτὶ or λογχὴ, my Conjecture might carry some probability with it ; but the Change of a χ into a τ seems too harsh and hard of Digestion. To which I answer, That these two Letters were often put for one another, even in the ancient Dialects of the Greek Tongue. Thus they of Tarentum said ὄρνιχες, for ὄρνιθες Birds ; and the Sicilians καλχη while others pronounced and wrote καλθη. Learned Men have derived the Latin *Hortus* from the Greek ὕπκή a Garden. *Mustus* New from μόχθος. *Nato* to Swim from νῆκω; and several other Changes, of the Letters C. and T. of which G. J. Vossius hath produced Instances, in his Treatise upon that Subject. So that without Trespassing too far upon the common Rules of Etymology, we may affirm, that *Lot* and λογχὴ are not more distant, than many other Words in the several Dialects of one and the same Tongue. And *Lot*, as well as λογχὴ signifies originally, that which falls to a Man by Chance.

Some perhaps may think, that instead of taking *Lot* for the primitive Word, I ought rather to have written *Los* after the German manner at this Day : But in regard *Lot* is used in English, Danish, Flemish and French, I thought this ought to be looked upon, as the ancient, and more authentick Pronunciation. However, either way it comes to the same Thing at last ; since it is certain, that in the Saxon Tongue, and its Dialects, T. and S. are often put for each other, as they were former-

ly in the Greek. But if you please, the same Comparison will hold between λογχὶ and *Los*, or λογχὶ and *Lot* indifferently : Since in Derivations *C. H.* is frequently turned into *S.* as the same *Vassins* hath abundantly proved.

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## C H A P. II.

*The Different Significations, of which the Words Good Luck and Ill Luck are capable.*

If we attend to the first and most simple Idea's which this Word *Good Luck* awakens in our Mind, when we hear it ; we shall find, that this Name is properly applied, to an Event, favourable to a Man, without any Care or Foresight of his own, contributing to it. Thus when a Man plays at any Game of Chance, as *Dice* for instance, and wins at it, this is called *Good Luck*, and such a one is said to be *Fortunate at Play*. A Man is likewise called *Lucky* when in Circumstances that conduce to Advancing his Interest, without any Concurrence of his own. A Merchant is said to be a *Fortunate Trader*, when his Ship arrives safe, or the Commodities, of which his Venture consists, rise in Value, without his Management. A General of an Army is esteemed *Fortunate*, when succeeding in Attempts, which were likely to have proved his Ruin, or when some unforeseen Accident favours his Designs. These Terms are used upon a thousand like Occasions ;

casions ; And the Words *Ill Luck* and *Un-fortunate* to denote just the contrary. Which Remark will hold in Words of the like Importance, in all other Languages.

It may perhaps be alledged, that I have already overthrown the whole Design of this Book , by assigning clear Idea's to Terms, which I pretend in most Mens Mouths to be thrown out at Random, without any meaning at all. And, were Men content to stop here, I should make no Difficulty to own my self in the wrong. But 'tis plain, that these Words are extended a great deal farther, than those most simple and obvious Idea's already instanced in. When we call a Man *Fortunate*, or say he hath *Good Luck* in any thing ; this does not only mean, that some Advantages have happened to him, which were not of his own procuring ; but besides, that there is somewhat attending upon, and as it were fixt to such a Person, which makes Him Successful, where any other Man would Miscarry ; and yet this Success cannot be attributed to any Prudence or good Management, wherein he excels those that miss of like Success. And I shall shew by some Examples, that this last Sense, is what Men commonly intend by *Good Luck*.

When a Man is said to be *Fortunate* at Play, this means, not only that he hath often won heretofore, but that he will in all likelihood win, whenever he pleases to play hereafter : Upon this Account, we are fond of *Betting*

upon his Head, or *going Partners* with him, if he will suffer us to share in his *Luck*. They on the other Hand, who are called *Unfortunate* in these Respects, we look upon, as Men that always, or at least generally, *Lose*; and it is usual to say, that such Men would do well to leave off *Play*; which yet the Men of *Good Luck* are permitted and encouraged to use. Now this makes it plain, that we have a dark Notion of an odd unintelligible Quality, from whence it comes to pass, that some Men *Win* and Others *Lose*. And in this Sense it is, that I affirm the Words *Good Luck* and *Ill Luck* to be empty Sounds, and to signify nothing at all.

Several Persons of Eminence have been esteemed *Fortunate*, in their Undertakings; and their former Successes have been received as Pledges of the like in all their future Attempts. A certain Principle of *Good Luck* hath been thought inherent in them, which could not fail of bringing every thing they took in Hand to its desired Effect. Many remarkable Examples of this kind are to be met with in Story; Some of which I will do my self the Justice to produce, that I may prevent any Suspicion of imposing upon my Reader in this Matter.

One of the most *Fortunate* Persons (for I shall use the vulgar Way of speaking in this and other such like Terms, till I have fully explained my self about them) that History makes mention of, is *Polycrates*, Tyrant of

*Samos*, who was Cotemporary with *Cambyses* King of *Perfia*; above five hundred Years before *Christ*. *Herodotus* gives us an Account of Him, some of the most memorable Passages whereof I will very briefly relate. He, though of private Fortune and low Birth, found means, in Conjunction with his two Brothers, to possess himself of the Isle of *Samos*, of which He and They were likewise Tyrants, or Kings. Now it was *Good Luck* not to sink under so bold and desperate an Attempt; but this was only the first step of his *great Fortune*. The holding a little Island in Partnership with two others, was no such mighty Matter: but, shortly after, he put one of his Brothers to Death, and the Other upon saving himself by Flight, and thus was left in sole Possession of *Samos*. His Battles both by Sea and Land were Successful to a Wonder. He conquer'd several Islands in the *Archipelago*, seized the Ships of all that passed there without any Damage to himself; and used to say, *That if they belonged to the Enemy, they were good Prize; but if they were Friends, it was in his Power to oblige them more by Restitution, than if they had never been seized at all.* All this was so far from working him Mischief, that he became the Terrour of the *Archipelago*, and of all the Coasts of *Greece* and *Asia*, which lye upon that Sea.

In the mean while he entred into Alliance with *Amasis* King of *Egypt*; who, having heard the continued Successes of *Polycrates*, wrote

wrote him Word, That though all the Advantages of a Prince, in Friendship with himself, were matter of great Joy to him, yet he could not but suspect so uninterrupted a course of *Happiness*, when he considered how the God's envy Men their Prosperity. He therefore advised him to cross the Strain of this *Fortune*, by industriously losing something, which was particularly dear to him. *Polycrates*, in Compliance with this Advice, went on Board, and threw into the Sea a very curious Seal, engraven upon an *Emerald*; so that no Possibility appeared of his ever recovering a Seal, upon which he set an infinite Value, and which he parted with, with great Reluctancy. Yet by *Good Luck* so it came about, (which perhaps was an Accident scarce to be parallel'd) that, five or six Days after, a Fisherman presented him with a Fish of prodigious Bigness, which he had taken in that Sea: And in the Belly of this Fish, the Seal was found. *Polycrates* his *Good Fortune* did not stop there; but there needs no more be said, to shew what *Herodotus* meant by calling him a *Fortunate Person*, which is a Title frequently applied to him, by that Historian.

And yet this very Man came to the most *Unfortunate End* that ever was, by suffering himself to be most grossly imposed upon by *Oreutes*, President of *Lydia*; who, to decoy him thither, pretended to have vast Sums of Money, which he designed to deposit in his Hands, intending afterwards to retire with him to

*Samos*;

*Samos*; where, he hoped to be out of the Reach of his enraged Master, the King of *Persia*, who sought his Life. *Polycrates*, though discouraged by his Friends, by the Oracles, and by a Dream of his Daughter which foretold his *Misfortune*, yet, in despight of all, trusted himself with *Oretes*, who Crucified him. We may reckon this Tyrant *Unfortunate to the last Degree*, not to reflect, that he could not with any Safety repose his Confidence in a Deputy of the King of *Persia*, and 'tis evident he lay not under any Necessity, nor indeed any reasonable Temptation, to leave *Samos*, where he knew himself safe, so long as he continued in it.

It is scarce to be imagined, that a Man should mention *Good Fortune*, and not think upon *Alexander*: Who from a petty Prince of *Macedonia* became Master of that huge Empire of the *Perians*, and made his Way successfully through Dangers innumerable, as every body knows. For his Story is too well understood, to need an Abridgment upon this Occasion. He might have been cut off a thousand times, in the Pursuit of his Conquests in *Asia*, had his Enemies had either Courage or Conduct. But He was so *Fortunate*, that the very things which would have ruined any Other Person, only conduced to render his *Good Fortune* more Conspicuous: Some Instances whereof I shall just mention from the principal Historians, who wrote his Life; and those in such Events as are very extraordinary and surprising.

*Quint.*

Quint. Curtius tells us, that Alexander himself admired his own Good Fortune, when he considered the Condition of those Passes, L. iii. c. 4. through which he had made his way into Cilicia ; and acknowledged, how easie a Matter it had been, to have knocked them all on the head, with Stones, had his Enemies but thrown them down from the Rocks, as they were marching underneath. *Contemplatus Locorum Situm, non alias magis dicitur admiratus esse felicitatem suam, obrui potuisse vel saxis confitebatur, si fuissent qui in subeuntes propellerent.* In another Passage, speaking of Parmenio, one of Alexander's chief Commanders ; He says, he durst not venture upon a Way, with which he was unacquainted, without the Directions of a Guide ; but depending upon his Master's Good Fortune, he ordered some of the Country People to be called in, and trusted himself to Their Conduct. *Ignotum iter sine duce non audiabat ingredi ; Felicitati tamen Regis Cap. 13. sui confisus, Agrestes, qui duces iterineris essent, excipi jussit.* He says in another place, " That Alexander's Good Fortune never forsook him in times of Difficulty and Danger. *Nec defuit illi perpetua in rebus dubiis felicitas.* He introduces Alexander, enjoyning his Men to rely upon his L. iv. c. 8. Good Fortune, and putting great c. ii. Confidence in it himself. Arrian observes, that his Good Fortune encouraged him to attempt the most hazardous and desperate things ; And many other Passages both these Authors

Authors have to the same purpose, not necessary to be insisted upon at present. These already produced prove sufficiently, that the Greek and Latin Words, which answer to *Good Fortune*, signify some notional unintelligible thing, which was supposed to attend constantly upon *Alexander*, and to render him successful. *Quintus Curtius* says, that notwithstanding a great deal of that Success was owing to his Gallantry, yet he was indebted to Fortune for the much greater part of his Conquests, for, she seemed to be at his Disposal entirely, and to have Devoted her self to Him only, of all Mankind.

*Fatendum est, cum plurimum virtuti debuerit, plus debuisse Fortuna, quam solus Omnium Mortalium in potestate habuit.* \* *Plutarch* indeed, hath composed two Discourses, wherein he undertakes to prove the contrary; but even there he uses the Words *Fortune* and *Good Success* in the same Sense I am speaking of. This Acceptation of the Words is no part of the thing he quarrels at; but he only takes upon him to shew, that the many Victories obtained by *Alexander* were truly and properly the Effect of his extraordinary Valour and Conduct, and not so much the Gift of his *Good Fortune*.

The same Author in the Life of *Sylla*, observes, that his Enemies esteemed him a very *Fortunate General*; and that he was so far from taking Offence at his Victories being attributed to

L. x. 5.

\* *De fortuna Alexandri.*

*Plutarch in Sylla.*

*his*

his *Good Fortune*, that himself affected to tell the World, how much better he succeeded in the Attempts of the greatest Hazard, than in others where all his Measures had been most prudently adjusted. After his Triumph when he gave the People of *Rome* an Account of all that had befallen him in the Wars just up

\* τὰς εὐ- then concluded ; he was equally “  
τυχαῖς. careful to relate all those \* Successes “  
which were owing to his *Good For-“  
tune*, as those other Advantages due to his “  
\* εὐπολι- Valour and Conduct. And at last “  
ordered that the Surname of \* For-“  
tunate should be given to him. “  
“

The *Roman* Historians have boasted greatly of the *Good Fortune* of *Pompey*; and *Cicero* makes use of this Argument, to dispose the People of *Rome* in his Favour; and to procure for him the Command of the War against *Mithridates*. Observe how he expresses himself upon this Occasion : “ It remains now, “ that I say something with regard to his “ *Good Fortune*, which, though no Man may “ presume to engage for in his own Case, yet “ we all may take notice of, and relate, in “ the Actions of Others ; but this I shall do “ with all that Modesty and Reserve, which “ becomes a Subject, depending wholly upon “ the Divine Power and Providence. Now “ I am clearly of Opinion, that when *Fabius* “ *Maximus*, *Marcellus*, *Scipio*, *Marius*, and “ sundry other Eminent Generals, were em- “ ployed by the State, it was not only their “ Cou-

Courage, but their *Fortune*, which induced the People to entrust them with the Command of their Armies. For no doubt can be made, but that, besides their great Abilities, there was a certain *Fortune* appointed by Divine Providence to attend upon some famous Men, and to Conduct them to Honour, and Renown, and uncommon Success in their Management of Important Affairs. Now, with respect to this Person in particular, I shall so temper my self, as to say, not that he hath *Fortune* absolutely at his own Disposal; but, which is sufficient for my Purpose, that we shall do well to remember how he hath succeeded formerly, and from thence to Proportion our Hopes and Expectations, of what he is like to do hereafter.

*Reliquum est, ut de Felicitate, quam præstare de se ipso nemo potest, meminisse & commemorare de altero possimus, sicut æquum est homini de potestate Deorum, timide & panca Dicamus. Ego autem sic existimo, Maximo, Marcello, Mario & ceteris Magnis Imperatoribus, non solum propter virtutem, sed etiam propter fortunam, sepius Imperia Mandata, atq; exercitus esse commissos. Fuit enim profectò quibusdam summis viris quedam ad amplitudinem, & gloriam, & ad res magnas bene gerendas divinitus Adjuncta Fortuna. De hujus autem hominis felicitate quo de nunc Agimus, bac utar Moderatione dicendi, non ut in illius potestate positam esse Fortunam, sed ut præterita meminisse, reliqua sperare videamur.*

Cic. pro  
Lege, Ma-  
nilia. c. xvi.

It



It were easie to produce other Testimonies concerning Pompey's *Good Fortune*, but there is no occasion at all for them. It will be more agreeable to my present Design, to Reflect a little upon the *Ill Fortune*, which befell him in the Civil War. First of all, when *Cæsar* began to oppose him, he was utterly unprovided of any Means to Resist him, and under a necessity of quitting *Rome* and *Italy*, to his Removal, in an ignominious manner. His Army in *Spain*, under the Command of *Afranius* and *Petreius*, was routed by *Cæsar*, without so much as one formal Battle. He could not hinder him from passing out of *Italy* into *Epirus*, tho' *Cæsar* had no Fleet, to withstand His. *Cæsar's* Troops passed twice without Opposition. He lost an Opportunity, which was put into his Hands, of defeating his Army; which might all have been cut to pieces, had he pursued the Advantage gained upon them in *Epirus*; And, in the Fight at *Pharsalia*, where there was all the likelihood in the World of his beating *Cæsar*, he was so *Unfortunate*, that the very thing, which in Appearance must have secured his Conquest, was the very Occasion of his Ruine. After this Defeat, instead of retreating into *Mauritania*, to King *Juba*, who would most gladly have received and assisted him with all his Forces, he unluckily threw himself into *Egypt*; and was there Assassinated and Murdered, just as he was going ashore.

*Cæsar*

ies Cæsar, on the Contrary, had nothing but  
ere good Fortune as we plainly see by his own  
precommentaries ; and even the rashest and  
most hazardous Undertakings prospered in  
his Hand. His History is universally known,  
and I need not insist upon Particulars. I  
will therefore only detain the Reader, with  
a single Passage, taken out of Plutarch's  
Book, *Of the Fortune of the Romans*. "Upon  
my leaving Brundusium, says he, the fourth of  
January, he crossed the Sea successfully,  
his Fortune getting the better of the Weather  
and the Season. When he had found  
Pompey, who was then in Epirus with his  
whole Army, and Master both of the Field  
and the Sea, though but a handful of his  
own Forces were with him, those under  
Antonius and Sabinus being not yet come  
up to joyn him ; he boldly embarked in a  
small Vessel, and set Sail, without letting  
the Pilot know who he was, and passing  
in the Disguise of a Servant. A violent  
Storm springing up, the Pilot began to  
tack, and then discovering himself, he said,  
" Go on, my Lad, and fear not ; spread all thy  
Sails to Fortune, and take in all the Wind thou  
canst, for thou hast Cæsar and his Fortune  
on board thee. Thus He was confident,  
that this Good Fortune failed and travelled  
with him, that it encamped with him in  
the Army, that it fought with him in his  
Battles, in short that it never left him.  
This made the Sea calm in the roughest  
Tem-

" Tempest, this made Winter to him become  
 " as Summer, this made Delay and Speed  
 " equally successful in the Event, and inspi-  
 " red Cowards with Courage; Nay, which  
 " is yet more amazing, this made Pompey  
 " flee, and Ptolomy Murder his Friend, that  
 " so Pompey might fall, without Cæsar having  
 " the Guilt of shedding his Son-in-law's  
 " Blood. They who read this Book of Plu-  
 tarch will find, that he endeavours to repre-  
 sent the Greatness of the Roman Empire, as an  
 Effect of *Good Fortune*, no less than of Conduct  
 or Courage.

By these Examples it is plain, and by infinite others it might be made appear, that it is no new thing for Men to use those Words, which in other Languages answer to *Good* and *Ill Fortune*, in a sense denoting somewhat peculiar to *this* or *that* Person, at least accompanying him for some Time, and upon some Occasions, which succeeds or defeats what he undertakes, so as that his Prosperous or Disastrous Events cannot be charged upon his own Prudence, or the Want of it. Though *Europe* be at this Day Christian, yet the Pagan Modes of Expression continue still in use; and many Words are taken into common Speech, which have scarce any Signification. For aft r all, what is this *Je ne scay quoy*, which denominates Men *Fortunate* or *Unfortunate*? It can only be One of these *Four* things. Either *First*, *Destiny*, which some heretofore, and many even in our Days look upon

pon as the Cause of all that happens in the World. Or Secondly, *Fortune*, which is but another Name for *Chance*. Or Thirdly, what the Heathen called a Man's *Good* or *Evil Genius*, and some Christians still term his *Good* or *Evil Angel*. Or else Lastly, *God himself*. Now I am positive, that no Man, without express Revelation, can be assured, that *God* or the *Angels* produce those Events, for which we can assign no natural Cause; and that *Fortune* and *Destiny* are merely imaginary things; so that this pretended Principle of *Good Luck* is in effect nothing at all. If a Man were with any Skill to examine those, who think they understand themselves perfectly well, when they talk of this Matter; He would soon find them at a loss to make out their own Meaning. If *Socrates* were alive again, who had the knack of confounding Errours, by driving Men to Absurdities with plain Questions, he would quickly gravel the greatest part of those who talk of *Good* and *Ill Luck*, by shewing them, that they do not know what it is they would be at. But it may perhaps be vain to expect, that any Man should be found in this Art of Reasoning, equal to that incomparable Philosopher. And therefore we must content our selves with another Method of Disabusing Mankind, by proving particularly, that never a one of these Four things just now mentioned is the real Cause of Mens *Good* or *Ill Luck*, either in *Lotteries* or in any other Matters, which have no ne-

necessary Dependence upon the Skill and  
Prudence of the Persons, who engage in  
them.

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## C H A P. III.

*That Destiny is not the Cause of Good Luck nor of Ill Luck.*

**S**Everal of the ancient Heathens, and particularly the Sect of the Stoicks, thought every thing that happened to be the unavoidable Effect of *Destiny*. And many no doubt at this Day tread in Their Steps; from whence it is, that we are so frequently told that *No Man can avoid his Destiny*, and that so many Events are charged upon him without what *Fatality*, which necessarily brings them to pass.

When the Stoicks heretofore were asked What they meant by *Destiny*? they readily

A Gell. L. vi. c. 2. gave this Answer, *A certain Frame or Disposition of all things mutually*

*linked together, and moving it self by eternal Successions of Causes and Effects, in such a Manner, that nothing can break the Chain, or divert its Course; so that, according to their Principles, whatever at any time came to pass could not possibly but come to pass.* It were easie to shew from express Testimonies of ancient Writers, how generally this Opinion was received; The Reader, if he please may consult those quoted in the Margin, for his

and is farther Satisfaction \*. As I do  
ge iot intend to enlarge upon explaining  
the Opinion, so neither do I  
upon the Arguments used, either  
in Defence, or in Prejudice of it.

The Whole of my Design, is only  
to shew, that They, who attributed all things  
to such a Chain of Causes, did not under-  
stand themselves, nor had any Idea of what  
part they said in the Matter.

First then. All they advanced concerning  
avoiding this *Destiny* was groundless, and supposed  
oubly; and that too such a Notion, as is of  
from no service towards the clearing any one Diffi-  
culty in the World. For who ever told the  
tha stoicks, that every thing is necessarily and  
necessarily brought about, in the Manner  
when we see it? How did they know, that Causes  
act with such uncontrollable Power, and that  
the Effects so inseparably follow them?  
This was not sure revealed to them from  
Heaven; They never pretended to such Di-  
vine Authority for it. It was in truth a  
by vulgar Opinion, which They, as well as  
many others, espoused by Strength of Fancy.  
There was not any inward Sentiment of their  
Mind, reflecting upon the *Fatality* of their  
own Actions, that had disposed them to it.  
Let any Man examine his own Breast, and  
say, in good earnest, whether he be thoroughly  
convinced, that all the Resolutions he takes  
were such as he found himself necessarily de-  
termined to; and that he could not possibly  
have

\* A Gell. L.  
vi. c. 2.  
Diog. Laert.  
L. vii. f. 149.  
J. Lips. de  
Constan. L.  
i. c. 17.

have resolved otherwise. No Man, I dare be confident, who speaks sincerely, is able to say this. Can we then affirm, that other Intelligent Beings, which the Stoicks, (who held an infinite Number of *Gods* of different Orders) acknowledged to be in the World, have no Liberty neither; but they are dragg'd along in all they do, by the same Chain of *Destiny*? It is evident, no Man can affirm this, without saying what he neither does, nor can know. Now if such Spirit as our *Humane Soul* be free, as we plainly find and feel it, at least in abundance of Instances; and if there may be other Intelligent Substances free as well as this, then it is the vainest thing in the World to talk of *Fatality* or *Destiny*; when infinite Free Spirits do a thousand things, which it was possible for them not to have done at all. But without running the Matter so far, this is most certain, that no Man can say, that he assuredly knows, that there are no free Agents or Causes in the World; and consequently it must be allowed that *Destiny* is a groundless Supposition, and advanced without any Proof. Nay, it is the less defensible because of no use in Philosophy: My meaning is, that, admitting the thing, we are never the nearer giving an account of any one natural Effect, than those who reject it; Nay These indeed give a much more probable Account, upon Their Principles, than the former. And if we make a Tryal now by applying

plying this Notion to any common Case, our own Experience will quickly demonstrate the Truth of what I say.

To keep close to my Subject ; I desire to know for instance, whence it comes to pass, that the Persons who had the greatest *Benefits* in the *Lotteries* lately drawn, had those advantagious *Lots* ; and that a world of People who took out as many or more *Tickets* than They, got nothing ? Will you think it an Answer to say , This was brought about by a Chain of necessary Causes, which disposed the Benefits and Blanks, in such a certain Order ? Where are these necessary Causes, which have produced this Effect ? It is ridiculous, to assert such a thing as this without any Proof ; and to give a meer Supposition for a Reason of somewhat else, and that too such a Supposition, as it is impossible to give any probable appearance to. Now if I, on the other hand, averr ; that this Combination of *Tickets* proceeds from the Motions given to them when they were mingled together, without any knowledge or design of the Persons by whom they were so mingled ; this is what no Man can disprove me in. If I proceed, and say again, that such a Motion is the Effect of a free Intelligent Substance, who shakes the Boxes in which the Tickets lye , more or less, and who is guided more by Humour or Fancy than by Reason ; This again is what cannot be denied me. Now then , I will say, such a one had the Great Lot, because,

C accord-

according to the Motion of the Tickets, his Number came up against that Lot; After which, there is no reason for any farther enquiry. For I ought not undertake, nor is it possible for me, to give the reason of that Motion and Order, into which the Tickets were put, without the Minglers knowing what effect it would produce; nor why they shook the Boxes, Ten times (for instance) rather than Nine or Eleven. So that the Stoick's *Fatality*, which some will have the Cause of good and bad Luck upon these Occasions, is the fondest Imagination that can be. But I have more against it still; which is, that They, who use the words *Fatality* and *Destiny*, have no Idea of what they say themselves; and this is my Second Remark upon the particular Point now before us.

'Tis true, they give several Definitions of these things, which come at last to that already mentioned. But they are such Definitions, as do not shew, that they have any clear and distinct, or indeed any Idea at all, of the thing they pretend to define. This will soon be seen, by examining *Chrysippus* his Definition in *A. Gellius*, whose words in the Original are these: ουσιῇ σύνταξις τὸ λόγον εἰς αἴσθητα τέρεσιν τοῖς ἐπέρεγις ἐπακολεύειν των. That is, A Natural Connexion of all this Universe, where from all Eternity one thing follows another con-

\* *αὐτοῖς  
σάτισ σύρ-  
πλοκῆς.* constantly and regularly. This Connexion, he says afterwards is \* inviolable. *A. Gellius* hath paraphrased it

his it thus: *Sempiterna quadam & indeclinabilis series rerum & Catena, volvens semet ipsa se, & implicans per aeternos Consequentia ordines, ex quibus apta connexaq; est.* The rendring whereof strictly and literally, as it is difficult, so is it unnecessary, because I have given the sense of it before.

Now, in order to comprehend the Fallacy of these Terms, we shall do well to observe, that our Ideas may be reduced to Two sorts. The First are of Things which have an actual existence without us ; The Other of such as our Mind forms to it self at pleasure, and which have nothing in nature and reality, which answers to our Ideas. When I, for example, am looking upon a Tree, and consider what it is that then presents it self to my thoughts, this is an Idea of a thing really existing, whether I think upon it, or not. But now, when I form to my self an Idea of a Tree, a Mile in heighth, and bearing golden Apples ; this is a fanciful Idea, and such as no Tree actually existing ever resembled. Now, when these two sorts of Ideas are to be defined, we must proceed very differently with respect to each of them. When an imaginary Idea is to be defined, you are at your own liberty ; Say but what you will have it, and the Definition is just and good. But when a thing which actually exists is to be defined, by the Idea we conceive of it, we are not then at liberty to make this Definition what we please, because

the existence of the thing is independent upon us : and, to make this a good Definition, it must shew, what the thing defined hath in common with the rest of the same *Species*, and what it hath peculiar to it self, whereby it is distinguished from them. So that, after having heard and understood this, we can conceive the thing before us clearly, without confounding it with any other thing whatsoever.

Great care must be taken not to confound the Definition of an abstracted Idea, with that which describes an Idea of a thing which really exists. For else it is evident, we shall not only attribute to things existing somewhat which in truth they have not ; but we shall also mistake abstracted and arbitrary Ideas, for the Images of things which have an actual existence.

And this is directly the Error of the Stoicks in the Matter now under consideration. They saw not any thing in Nature, which could oblige them to think, that there is an unavoidable *Destiny* in all Events. The Idea they have been pleased to form to themselves of this Matter cannot be said to be copied after Nature, as that of a *Tree* is from something seen by us. It is an Idea purely notional and abstracted, such as they have tryed to frame as they could, and in which these two things are observable. *First*, They take it for granted without any Proof, that there is in reality such a *Destiny*, as they had formed in their own imagination. They con-

found

found an Idea framed at pleasure, with an Idea of somewhat actually existing ; and this shews, that they did not rightly understand themselves. *Secondly*, Setting aside the thing it self, considered as somewhat existing, otherwise than in our own imagination, yet, if we examine the Idea, which answers to the Words I have now quoted, even thus we shall find it loose and altogether indistinct. Those Words, *A Connexion of all things in the Universe with each other*, signify nothing particular and express upon this occasion ; and the rest of the Definition, *which follow one another from all Eternity*, are every whit as dark and confused as the former. This is a blind Description of a chimerical *Je ne sais quoy*, which hath some affinity and relation to the loose Ideas of *Disposition*, *Connexion*, and *Consequence*. It is a Picture of an unknown *Entity*, of which no Man hath a particular Conception, and by virtue whereof, according to the Principles of the Stoick Philosophy, every thing is necessarily brought to pass.

*Plutarch*, who frequently falls foul upon these Philosophers, though he seem in part to concur with their Opinion of *Destiny*, will furnish us with sundry and sensible Instances of Expressions, which have no determinate signification. In his Book, *how Men ought to study the Poets*, he tells us, that several things attributed to the Gods, are not to be understood of the Gods themselves, but of *Destiny*

or *Fortune*. When *Hesiod*, for the purpose, forbids us to reproach any *Man* with his Poverty, because *this is the Disposal and Gift of*

*the \* Blessed, that exist eternally.*  
\* i.e. the Gods. *Plutarch* hath this Remark. “The

“ Poet calls that the Gift of the  
“ Gods, which depends upon *Fortune*. He  
“ tells us, we ought not to blame those,  
“ whom *Fortune* hath made poor, but that  
“ Poverty is then blamable and reproach-  
“ ful, when attended with *Idleness, Meanness*  
“ of *Spirit, Effeminacy, and Prodigality* in the  
“ Person labouring under it. For the Name  
“ of *Fortune* being not yet commonly used,  
“ and Men being sensible, that their utmost  
“ Prudence could not obstruct the sovereign  
“ Power of a Cause acting without Rule or  
“ Method, they described this Cause by at-  
“ tributing it to the *Gods*. And afterwards,  
having cited some Verses of *Homer*, which  
seem to make *Jupiter* the Author of Evil, he  
adds, that *by Jupiter we are to understand De-  
stiny or Fortune, which are Causes which we  
cannot comprehend, and such as have no dependence  
at all upon our selves.* ‘Εν τοις τὸν αὐτολόγους οἵματις αἰτίαις. These Words shew plainly, that those Expressions are Names for two very dark Ideas, and which are little, if at all, different from *Nothing*.

Now, though this Observation be most true, yet Men are so used to talk what they do not understand, and at the same time to fancy they understand what they say perfect-  
ly

y well, that the same Expressions continue till in use. To say nothing at present of Fortune, which will come under our Consideration by and by, we every Day hear Men expressing themselves after this manner; that such a one was brought to such a place by his Good or Ill Fate; that his Good Fate put him upon venturing in such a Lottery, where he got a good Benefit; That his Ill Destiny ordained he should put in a greater Sum than he could afford in a Lottery, where he drew nothing but Blanks. That his Good Destiny brought him a good Lot; That his Ill Destiny kept him from winning, and a world of other such like Forms of Speech in common Conversation.

If the much greater part of Men who talk thus were called upon to explain their own meaning, they would find themselves wretchedly at a loss. For most People, in speaking, are governed more by Custom, than by Knowledge and Consideration.

They use this Word, upon some Occasions, which they find it applied to before by others, without attending to any Sense of it. I have often made the Experiment, and found, that Men, who had their *good* and *ill* Fate constantly in their Mouths, have not been able to answer me, when I asked what they meant by it. They were surprised at my enquiring what they intended by so common an Expression, but yet they were not able to make me understand what they would be at, when they used it.

If we consult the *Gentlemen of the French Academy*, they tell us in their Dictionary, that the *Philosophers gave this Name to a necessary Chain of Causes, subordinate to each other, which never fail of producing their Effect ; and that the Poets understood by it a Power, to which the Gods themselves are subject.* This Definition is much the same with the former, only not altogether so exact. And besides, these Gentlemen had no reason to make a difference between the Poets and the Philosophers, for both agreed in thinking the *Gods* subject to *Destiny*, as I could easily shew, were it necessary to my purpose. I need not insist longer upon this Definition, after what hath been said to That of the Stoicks. But they have given us another, whereby they seem to intend an Explication of *Fate* and *Destiny*, as they are commonly used at present. *Destiny*, they tell us, *is likewise taken for the particular Lot of each Person, and for that Portion of Good or Evil ordinarily distributed to each Man.*

One would think this Definition sufficiently clear, and that all I have said upon this occasion might be abundantly confuted by having recourse to it. And indeed, did it import no more than barely the Events of Things, without any regard to the Necessity of such Events, or to some unknown Cause, which determines and produces them, the Difficulty would vanish. But I assert, that in using this word, Men constantly imply in their

their Ideas of it, this *Cause*, and the *Necessity* of such Events. The *Academy* have put this beyond dispute, by the Examples they give; as, *No Man can avoid his Destiny*; *This is the Fate of Great Men*, or *Great Common-wealths*, and the like. The First of these makes manifestly for me; For it is derived from the Pagan Idiom, who constantly delivered their Minds after this manner. Many Examples whereof *Stobæus* hath left us in his eighth and ninth Chapters of the Collections of Natural Productions. The two others upon enquiry will be found to confirm what I have said. We commonly say, 'tis the *Fate* of Great Men to be more esteemed when dead, than while yet living; and we plainly mean by this, not only, that this very often happens, but that their being so is the Effect of I know not what *Fatality*, which entails Envy upon Virtue and Merit. So again we say, it is the *Fate* of Great Common-wealths to fall by their own Weight, and to ruin themselves when they grow too Great; By which is inferred, that there is a certain Period, and Measure of Greatness, determined by *Destiny*, to which when Common-wealths have once attained, all beyond that tends to their decay and undoing. Every Reader will easily recollect what he hath heard or read in Authors to this purpose.

Perhaps these Gentlemen thought *Destiny* and *Fatality* to be two distinct Things. For they define the latter, by calling it *Unavoidable*

*able Destiny*, which looks, as if they had a Notion, that there is a sort of *Destiny* which may be avoided. They have likewise among their Examples put *Fatal Destiny*. Now *Fatal* and *Inevitable* when applied to *Destiny*, are mere *Epithets* and *Expletives*, fit only for Poets when they want to make up a Verse, but otherwise of no use at all.

M. Richelet seems to know no *Destiny*, but that which is inevitable; For his Definition of it is, a *Certain Disposition and Order of Providence*, which makes things infallibly come to pass. This is in truth the Stoicks Notion put into Christian Language: And thus *Lipsius* hath done in his Book of *Constancy*: The Abbot *Furetiere* comes very near M. Richelet, and defines *Destiny* thus: *A Disposition or Chain of Second Causes, ordered by Providence, which infers and produces a Necessity in the Event.*

I shall not here contest these Definitions; because my *Eighth Chapter* will oblige me to it, where I propose to shew, that *God* is not the Cause of what the World call *Good Luck*, as is generally supposed. But besides, it is plain, that They who use these words, *Destiny* and *Fatality*, think as little of Providence at that instant, as if there were no such thing. These Gentlemen indeed, if we observe it strictly, have defined what the word *Destiny* must signify, if it signify any thing at all: but by no means what the Generality of People intend by it, when they speak it. Now there is

is a vast difference, between giving us a Definition of that which Men should mean by a Word, and that which they generally do mean by it, in common Discourse.

It is sufficient, that from what hath gone before, I may fairly conclude, that Stoical *Destiny*, or *Fatality* signifies nothing, neither in the Books of the Ancient or Modern Writers, nor in the Mouth of the Vulgar. There is no real Being in Nature, to which these Names properly belong; and no thing is more loose and fantastical, more confused and unintelligible, than that arbitrary Idea, which Men form of it in their own Minds. A Man had much better say nothing, than affirm, that he Won or Lost in a *Lottery*, because it was his *Good* or *Ill Fortune* to do so. I should think it much more excusable to declare I Won or Lost by *Hocus pocus tempora bonus*, and think the Gibberish of common Jugglers the better Sense of the Two.

#### C H A P. IV.

*That the Terms Good or Ill Fortune frequently mean nothing, no more than Chance. What Sense this last Word is capable of.*

The second Cause usually assigned for *Good* or *Ill Luck* is *Fortune*; or, which is but another Name for the same thing, *Chance*. Now I think my self able to prove, that these English words, and those which answer to them

them in other Languages, are as far from having any clear Significations as those treated of in the last Chapter. But before I reprove the modern Use of these Words, it will be proper to enquire, what Notions the ancient Greeks and Romans had of them, because from thence they are derived down to us. If They were at a loss for their own Meaning in them, it can hardly be expected, that We should understand them better: And we indeed are more to blame, because Religion and Time ought to have enlightened our Understandings, and taught us to speak more correctly than They did.

The word *νύχτι* in Greek, and *Fortuna* in Latin, signified formerly what *Fortune* does in English; but withal, some unknown Principle, by which a thousand Things came to pass without any necessity of their being thus or thus. This is the Difference between *Fortune* and *Destiny*, that the One supposes a necessary Cause of the Effects produced by it, and the other excludes it.

\* Aristotle, whose natural Philosophy is generally founded upon the Expressions and Notions of the People, condemns the Philosophers, who had written before him, of a great Absurdity, for not defining *νύχτι Fortune*, or *Chance* *αὐτομάτων*; because 'tis clear, he says, beyond dispute, that *Fortune* or *Chance* produce infinite Effects in Nature. And though They had not thought so, yet they ought to have spoken

ken to them, and so much the rather, because they sometimes used these Words themselves.

For his own part, he made no doubt, but that there were such things as *Fortune* and *Chance*. And this is his manner of Arguing upon them, by which he discovers the Vulgar Forms of Speech to have oftentimes lain at the bottom of his Opinions. “ In regard we “ see that *some* things come to pass always, “ and *others* for the most part, after the same “ manner, this makes it plain, that *Fortune* “ is not the Cause of any of these things. That “ which is an Effect of *Fortune* cannot proceed “ from a necessary and regular Cause, which “ *always*, nor from such a one as *generally*, Acts “ alike. But now, since some things there “ are, besides these, which happen so, that “ all the World declare them to be the Effect “ of *Fortune*, we may plainly see, that there “ are such things, as *Fortune* and *Chance*. For “ we know very well, both that the things “ of this Nature are the Work of *Fortune*, and “ that what *Fortune* does is always of this Na- “ ture. This manner of Argument supposes the common Forms of Speaking to be the Rule of True and False ; and, that a Man may conclude from Words to Things, which, in a Philosopher, is a most ridiculous Imagination. For what is more common, than for the Peo- ple to entertain false Notions of Things ; and for the ways of expressing themselves, suited to their Notions, to be very improper and distant from the Truth ?

After-

Afterwards he says, that "when any thing  
"of Advantage happens to a Man by Acci-  
"dent, This is such a thing as we call the Ef-  
"fect of *Fortune* or *Chance*. For Example :  
A Man goes to a Place, whither he does not  
use to go ; and where he should receive Mo-  
ney, though at that time he went not thither  
with any such design ; if he receive Money  
there, we say, that he went thither, and re-  
ceived it, by *Chance*.

He pretends again, that Herein *Fortune*  
and *Chance* differ. *Fortune* is not properly  
concerned, except in the Actions of such Be-  
ings, as act upon a Principle of Choice ;  
whereas *Chance* takes place in the Effects of  
Causes, which do not act by Choice. I know  
not whether this Difference were constantly  
observed in common Speech, but it is certain,  
that those Bodies were called *Automata*, which  
were thought to move of themselves.

Thus this Philosopher imagined he had de-  
fined the Nature of a Cause in Physicks, while  
he only defined the Words, by which Peo-  
ple used to express themselves : for he pre-  
tends, that *Chance* had a great hand in Form-  
ing the Universe ; which is a most absurd  
Fancy, and more becoming a Clown or an I-  
deot, than a Philosopher, as we shall see by  
and by.

The Latins, who put no such distinction be-  
tween *Fortuna* and *Casus*, define them thus :  
" *Lot*, *Chance*, *Fortune*, *Event*, what else is  
" all this, but a thing's falling out after one

par-

" particular manner, when it might either  
 " not have happened at all, or have happened  
 " after quite another manner than it hath  
 " done. *Quid est aliud Sors, quid Fortuna, quid  
 Casus, quid Eventus, nisi cum sic ali- De Div.  
 quid accidit, sic evēnit, ut vēl non ca- Nat. L. 2.  
 dere atq; evenire, vēl aliter cadere atq;  
 evenire potuerit ?*

c. 6.

A Man that reads these Definitions of *Fortune*, would be apt to think, by some part of them, that the Ancients did mean something by it ; and yet on the other hand to suspect, that they had no Notion at all of the matter. *Aristotle* is express that the common Way of Speaking proves *Fortune* and *Chance* to be something. *φαντασίαι δὲ τι εἰσὶ τι οὐ τυχὴ καὶ τὸ αὐτόματον.* But if they be something, what sort of Things are they ? Are they Spirits ? Are they Bodies ? Are they of some different Nature ? *Aristotle* in his Sixth Chapter of the Second Book of *Physicks*, distinguishes them plainly from Spirit and \* Nature, for these, (he says,) are the Causes of all things Essentially, and *per se*. These two last Causes, he owns, did at first produce the Heaven, and all the material World, but yet he says, that when all this was done, a thousand Things were effected by *Chance* afterwards. But still he does not inform us, what this pretended Cause is, considered in it self. For in truth he knew not what he meant by it himself. And one may see he did not, by his quoting the common Form of Speech, explaining the

\* i.e. Body.

the Word by the Use of it ; but never giving any Definition of *Fortune*. He does indeed disallow that Notion of some, who made Fortune a real Cause, but such as the Mind of Man knew nothing of, because too divine a thing for Man to comprehend it. But all that he does, is only telling us the Occasion, how this Word grew so generally into Use.

In the mean while, not to mention the Poets and their Modes of Speech, which might be accused of too great liberty in Fiction, the Temples, which in several places were dedicated to *Good or Ill Fortune*, seem to say, that This was generally reputed a Deity. For certainly Men must be mad to the last Degree, who shall go about to build Temples, address their Prayers and Praises, and offer Sacrifices, to any but *Gods*; that is, such as they believe to have a divine, and much more an actual, Existence. Now This Reasoning were certainly conclusive, did Men always speak and act consistently; but as it is, they often speak Words which they do not understand, and do many Things, when they know not what they do. *Tullus Hostilius* built a Temple to *Fear and Paleness*. Others

Pallori &  
Pavori Liv.  
l. 1. c. 27.  
Cic. de.  
Nat. Deor.  
l. 2. Lactan.  
l. 1.

erected Temples to the *Mind*, to *Vertue*, to *Honour*, to *Piety*, to *Fidelity*, to *Hope*, to *Chastity*, to *Concord*, to *Peace*, to *Rest*, to *Safety*, to *Fortune*, to *Liberty*, &c. Others again were consecrated, to the *Feaver*, to the *Year*, the *Month*, to *Art*, to

to Poverty, to Old Age, to Death. Now I can by no means perswade my self, that the Ancients believed all these things to be things actually Existing ; but they knew not what they did, when they built such Temples : and therefore the Actions of Men will give us no surer ground of arguing from them, than their Words and common Talk will.

Nay Some among them were well aware, that, when Men talked of Fortune, they talked of a thing they did not understand. *Democritus*

says, *Men formed to themselves a Phantome of Fortune, only for a Cover to their Ignorance.* This Passage is

Euseb.  
Præp. Ev.  
l. xiv. 27.

likewise quoted from a Comedy of *Philemon* : *There is. no such Deity as Men call Fortune, no; no such matter; all things happen by Chance: and that which the World calls Fortune, is any thing that happens to Men, without being able to give a Reason why it should do so.* So again *Tully*, The Causes under the Governance of Fortune are secret, for every thing must have its Cause, but whatever is effected by a hidden Cause, and by a Method which we cannot account for, this is properly an Effect of Fortune. And *Juvenal* tells us, that Fortune is only a Goddess in Fiction, and of Mens making.

Cic. Top.  
c. 17.

Sat. x.

*Nullum Numen abest si sit Prudentia, sed Te  
Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, caloq; locamus.*

Fortune was never Worshipp'd by the Wise ; But, set aloft by Fools, usurps the Skies.

Thus

Thus you see, by the Testimony of these Heathen Writers, that the Word *Fortune* signifies nothing at all, though some pretended, that it imports a real Existence. I shall clear this Point, by enquiring into the thing it self, when I have first produced two Passages of Christian Authors, who expose and confute the Worshippers of *Fortune*, and were of my Opinion, that this Word signifies Nothing.

The former of these is *Lactantius*, who argues thus: " *Fortune* in it self is nothing;

*Inst. Divin.*      " we are not to suppose, that the  
I. 3. c. 29.      " Word denotes any thing of real  
" existence, take it in what sense

" you please. *Fortune* is no more than an  
" Event, which is sudden and unexpected.  
" But the Philosophers, that they might  
" not fail to mistake in every thing, pre-  
" tended to be very Wise in a trifling Mat-  
" ter. Those I mean, who change the Sex  
" of *Fortune*, and will needs have it a God,  
" and not a Goddess. The same Deity they  
" call sometimes *Nature*, and sometimes *For-*  
" *tune*, because as *Cicero* observes, it effects  
" many things which we do not expect, by reason  
" of our Ignorance in the Causes that produce  
" them. And, not knowing the Reasons why a  
" thing happens, Men must needs be ignorant  
" what it is, that brings it about. The same  
" Author in a very serious Tract, where he  
" gives his Son Rules drawn from Philosophy,  
" to govern him in his Behaviour, Who, says  
he,

he, " does not know, that the Power of Fortune  
" is great, which side soever she takes? For  
" when she opposes us, we are certainly worsted.

*Lactantius* (after some Reflections upon *Cicero*, which are not much to the Matter now in hand,) proceeds in this manner: "Who does not know? says he, For my part I know no such thing. Let him shew me, if he can, what that Power is, what is the Favour of *Fortune*, and what her Opposition to us. It is by no means for the Reputation of a Man of Wit and Parts, to lay down a thing for granted, which, if one deny, he is not able to make out.

The other Author, which I shall produce upon this Occasion, is \* *Boethius*, whose Style in Beauty is equal to that of *Lactantius*, and his Reasoning is much before His. " If any one (says *Philosophy*, with whom *Boethius* is holding a Dialogue) defines an accidental Event (*Casum*) and such as is not produced by any Connexion of Causes; I assert, that *Chance* is nothing in the World, that it is an empty Word, without any Sense or Signification at all. For where can *Chance* find a place, in things which God keeps in a regular Method? There is no greater Truth, than that nothing can come out of nothing. Not one of the Ancients ever contradicted this Maxime, tho' they understood it, not of the *Efficient*, but the *Material*, Cause. Now, if a thing were

\* *De Conf.*  
*Phil. L. 1.*  
*Prof. i.*

" were produced without a Cause, that thing  
 " would come out of nothing. But, if this  
 " cannot be, then neither can there be such  
 " a thing as *Chance*, according to our Defi-  
 " nition of it. Well, but (replies *Boethius*)  
 " is there then nothing, which we can pro-  
 " perly call *fortuitous* or *casual*? Or is there  
 " somewhat to which these Names belong,  
 " tho' the Vulgar know it not? *Aristotle*,  
 " (says *Philosophy*) hath cleared this Difficulty  
 " in few words, in his Book of Physicks, and  
 " comes very near to the truth of the mat-  
 " ter. What I pray is his Resolution of the  
 " Case? (Says *Boethius*.) When any thing is  
 " done with a certain design, (replies *Philo-*  
 " *sophy*) and some other thing, different  
 " from that which was intended, does for  
 " other causes happen: this thing, so be-  
 " sides the Intention of the Agent, is what  
 " we call a *fortuitous* or *casual* Event. As if  
 " a Man (for instance) in digging his Ground,  
 " with a design to cultivate it, should find a  
 " Pot of Gold hidden there: We say this is  
 " *casual*; but yet it had a real and proper  
 " Cause; and the unforeseen and unexpect-  
 " ed Concurrence of such Causes forms that  
 " which is termed a *casual* Event. If He,  
 " who cultivated his Ground had not digged  
 " it; or if he who buried this Treasure had  
 " not laid it in that place, the Gold had not  
 " been found as it was. These then are the  
 " Causes of that *accidental* Gain, which hap-  
 " pened to the Man by this Concurrence of  
 " theirs,

" theirs, altogether foreign from the Design, which he proposed to himself in digging his Ground. The Remainder of this Argument may be seen in the Original, for I cannot agree with *Boethius* in every Branch of it. But this proves, that if the Ancients used the words of *Fortune* or *Chance* to denote any unknown Being, which acts without any Rule, and which is neither a Spiritual, nor a Bodily Substance, they knew not their own meaning. And yet thus I have shewed, that *Aristotle* used them, whatever *Boethius* says here to bring him off.

Let us now consider the Thing in it self; And, in order to discern what Sense these words *Fortune* and *Chance* are capable of, we must remember, that there are only Two sorts of Beings, which we know of, that can contribute to any thing that befals us. The First sort, consists of *Bodies*, which, acting alone, and without the interposition of any other Cause, leave no room for *Fortune* or *Chance*: Because they act by fix'd unalterable Rules of Mechanism, as all, who have the least knowledge of Mechanicks and Natural Philosophy are abundantly satisfied. The Common People indeed say, a Body falls of it self, when no Man, nor any sensible Cause, that comes under our Observation, threw it down. As when Fruit falls from a Tree, or a Tile from the Roof of a House, without any pulling, or blast of Wind, to blow it down. And it is a very usual thing,

to

to say such things fell of themselves, or by *Chance*. But it is by no means true, that nothing interposed, and that no external Cause contributed to that Fall. The Air and the Weight of the Bodies, (not to mention several other Causes that might concur) occasioned their Fall. A Body would continue for ever in the same State, did not some Cause from without make an Alteration. This is an Axiom in Natural Philosophy, which I need not here go about to prove.

The second sort of Beings, are what we call *Spirits*, who, among several other Faculties belonging to them, are endued with *Liberty*, which they exercise upon infinite Occasions. They can at any time *do* or *not do* what they do; they can do it after *this* or *that* manner; they *determine themselves* in doubtful or indifferent Cases, or what they look upon to be such, by Humour and Fancy; Without any Other Reason, but that they have a mind to act so or so, and without the interposition of any thing, that should necessarily engage their Judgment, or their Will. Without troubling my Readers with a long Lecture of Metaphysics, I appeal to every Man's own Sense and Experience, and am entirely perswaded, that all who will speak truly what they feel within themselves, in innumerable Instances of Humane Life, will agree, that what I have said, is the very Truth of the Case.

In this respect it may be said, that the free determination of a Spiritual Substance is an Effect of Chance, because it does not proceed from any necessary Cause. And, in regard Spirits act much upon Bodies, the intervening of these Operations produce somewhat *casual* in those Motions, which otherwise would not be at all. We will put the case, that a Box full of Tickets (for the purpose) lyes upon a Table; Those Tickets will all remain in the same situation, till they are moved, and that which lyes uppermost, will infallibly be drawn first. Here is no *Chance* in all this. But if a Man shakes this Box several times, without knowing what Alteration this shaking makes in the Order of the Tickets, by the Will of that Person intervening upon this occasion, and that in a manner altogether free, Here is somewhat of *Chance*. It is in the Choice of that Person, whether he will shake the Box at all or not; whether he will shake it more or less; and to turn it as many different ways as he pleases. In shaking and turning it he is guided purely by his own Humour; without knowing what Effect this will have; after all which, that Ticket which comes next to hand is taken out, without knowing to what Person it belongs.

This is the usual Manner of Drawing in *Lotteries*, and this we may call meer *Chance*, which makes such a Man's Ticket come up against such a Lot. By this you see, that

*Chance,*

*Chance*, in proper speaking, is Nothing ; And that, when we say, Such a Hit is owing to *Chance*, the true meaning of it is, that this is not meerly the Mechanical Effect of the Motion of the Tickets, but that some Intelligent Being contributed to it, which gave its free Assistance in the thing , without knowing what would be the Consequence, or how that Change in the Tickets could be made. So that the Word is rather of a *Negative*, than an *Affirmative* Importance ; or the Name of a *Negative* rather than a *Positive* Idea. It denotes only thus much, that there was no Cause intervening , which did necessarily produce a certain and determinate Effect ; or that made use of its Understanding to produce that particular Effect.

The Abbot *Furetiere* observes, that *Chance* is sometimes spoken of as a Person, and denotes an Imaginary Being , to which we foolishly attribute those Effects , of whose Causes we are ignorant. I own, that sometimes *Chance* may have those Effects attributed to it, which have a determinate and necessary Cause. But when Men express themselves thus, it is from their Ignorance , at least if they pretend to speak properly. But thus much is certain however, as I have shewn, that it is an Imaginary Being , a Creature of our own Brain ; and, that nothing less than a Poetical License will justifie our mentioning *Chance* as a Person ; which yet is a Form of Speech so much countenanced by common use , that there

there are very few Expressions more frequently to be met with.

From these Premises it evidently follows, that *good Luck*, which is a Consequence of this *Chance*, is likewise, in the common acceptation of the Word, a pure *Chimera*. People pretend, that *good Luck* is confined and fixed to some certain Persons, and at the same time that it is the Effect of *Chance*, which is a manifest Contradiction. The Nature of *Chance* consists in its dependence upon a free Cause, determining it self by Humour and Fancy, without Order or Design; and yet they will needs have it, that *good Luck* is so fixed, that it shall happen to *this or that* particular Man. Now what can be more palpably absurd, than to assert, that an Effect is, and is not, determined at the same time. Thus *Chance* in it self is nothing, and the *good Luck* which goes along with some certain Persons, is, if I may so say, somewhat less than nothing. The First expresses a *negative Idea* only, the Second a *contradictory Idea*, if it be allowable to call a Contradiction an *Idea*.

The Case is all one with the word *Fortune*; which is sometimes represented as a *Cause*, peremptorily resolved to oblige some, and to persecute others. *Fortune* was on *Pompey's* side before the Civil Wars, but afterwards, she forsook, and fought against him. *Alexander* had her at his beck till his last Sickness, but then he is thought Unfortunate not to escape Poysoning. In short, Ancient and

Modern Writers both abound with Expressions opposite to each other, when they speak of the Constancy or Inconstancy of *Fortune*. The only Account whereof is, that This is a *Phantome* of their own forming, and that their Imagination added to, or took from, it at pleasure, and as they saw occasion. We commonly say, that Men are the *Sport* of *Fortune*; that she plays with them for her Diversion; but it were more proper to say, that *Fortune* is our *Play-thing*; since we give, and take away from her, just what we think fit.

The Gentlemen of the French Academy, after having said, that *Fortune* was a Goddess with the Heathens, add, that Now-a-days, though we do not own *Fortune* to be any thing in it self, yet most of the Expressions then in use are still continued, but that they are to be understood in a figurative Sense. If these Expressions signified nothing in the Mouths of Them who erected Altars to *Fortune*, I vehemently suspect, they do not signifie much more, in the Writings of Those Authors, who use them figuratively now. For indeed they are only used by a *Prosoopæia*. Now in a *Prosoopæia*, we are allowed indeed to speak of what we conceive, in the quality of a Person; but I have never heard nor read, that we might make a Person of a meer *Nothing*, or rather of that which is less than *Nothing*, of that which we are not able to form any, no not so much as a *negative* Conception of. I have never observed any thing of this kind done, except

except a Poem entituled *Nothing*; which is altogether founded upon an equivocal Construction of the Word, which is not easie, if possible, to be rendred properly.

Others, as the Abbot *Furetiere* in particular, pretend, that by *Fortune* at present we are to understand *Providence*. These are his Words in his Dictionary: *This was formerly a Heathen Goddess, and thought to be the Cause of all surprising and extraordinary Events: whereas in truth it is the Divine Providence, acting by Methods unknown, and far above Humane Wisdom.* It is confess, that the Word *Fortune* ought many times to be thus understood; if we will allow it to signifie any thing in the Writings of many Men, and even of some Authors whose Eloquence and Delicacy of Expression is admired by all the World. But yet this was not the thing They meant by it, as will quickly appear, if we take out the Word *Fortune*, and substitute that of *Providence* in its stead.

I will produce some Instances to save my Reader the trouble of Search and Recollection; such as will shew, that there is no Figure in them, which admits of any rational Meaning; whether they would interpret it, as personating a *thing that is not*, or whether they would put upon *Providence* the vile and scandalous Disguise of *Fortune*. These shall be taken out of M. *Rochefoucault's* Maxims, which must be acknowledged a Master-piece in their kind. Observe how he expresses himself in his 60th

**Reflection :** *They that think themselves Men of Merit, esteem it a Happiness to be Unfortunate, that so They and Others may look upon them as Persons considerable enough to be set as a Mark for Fortune.* I can hardly think M. Furetiere would have ventur'd to say *a Mark for Providence* in the same sense ; or that the Author of the Maxims entertained any thing like so impious a Thought, when he wrote thus.

The 64th begins thus : *The Contempt of Riches was in some ancient Philosophers a secret Desire of doing Right to their Merit, and revenging themselves upon the Injustice of Fortune ; by despising the same Advantages, which she would not suffer them to enjoy.* Certainly no Man would talk of the *Injustice of Providence*, or of taking a Revenge upon That.

The 458th observes, that *Fortune never appears so blind, as to Those whom she does no good to.* Now this is not only downright Paganism in the Expression, but even in the Idea, or that which is pretended to answer to those Expressions.

And yet thus much Right ought to be done M. Furetiere, to acknowledge, that in many Passages, where the Word *Fortune* is to be met with, that of *Providence* may very properly be exchanged for it. An Instance whereof the 70th Reflection gives us, *Fortune turns every thing to the advantage of those she loves.* *Providence* will stand very well there, and so make this Maxim in sense almost the same with Rom. 8.20. *that of St. Paul, That all things work toge-*

together for Good to them that love God. Though, 'tis probable, M. *Rochefoucaut* might not have this in his thoughts neither. But, notwithstanding this Agreement of Sense upon some Occasions, we cannot reasonably allow, that one and the same Word, should be used for so many different Purposes, as sometimes to signify a Pagan Goddess, sometimes a meer Notion and Chimera of Mens own Brain, and at others the Wise and Good Providence of God ; and that those should consequently be brought in at all turns to share the Government of the Universe with that Providence. I meddle not at present with the Absurdity of This upon a Religious Account, but am content to observe, that that Spirit of Exactness and Justness of Expression, which ought to govern all our Discourse, should by all means keep us from such dark, such ambiguous, such insignificant, Forms of Speech.

Some indeed have perceived the Necessity of Reforming our Modern Idioms in this respect. The Author of the *Penseés diverses*, which are sometimes annexed to M. *Rochefoucaut*'s Maxims is one of <sup>Pens. 48.</sup> These. One Instance we have in these words, *Fortune gives out the Parts, which each Person plays upon this Theatre of the World, blindly and humoursomely. And hence there are so many ill Actors, because so few People are fitted for their Characters.* After which he adds by way of Correction, *Now, to speak in Terms more becoming Christians, Fortune here is nothing else,*

*but the Providence of God, which, for Reasons unknown to Us, permits this Disorder and Irregular Proceeding.* Now, in this case, the Emendation ought to have gone rather upon this foot, that instead, of *Fortune does such things blindly*, he should have said, *Providence permits such things to be done.* For it is plain, as the words *Iye*, we can by no means understand *Providence by Fortune* in that Passage.

What hath been said of *Chance* and *Fortune*, may be as well applied to *Lot*, (*Sors*) which signifies the same thing; only *Sors* is a word more familiar in Poetry than Prose. All These amount to no more than *Negative Terms*, as I observed before; and all they do, is to make us comprehend, that the Effect then spoken of, is not the Result of a Cause which acts necessarily and is expressly determined to produce it.

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## C H A P. V.

*The Objections drawn from Lotteries ; and all Games that depend upon Chance, answered ; and shewed insufficient to denominate Men Fortunate, or that any Persons have Good Luck constantly going along with them.*

I Am perfectly satisfied, that what hath been said of that *Luck* which is pretended to be the Effect of *Destiny* or *Chance*, will not admit of any substantial Reply : And am apt to promise my self, that all who read the two last Chapters heedfully, will be of my mind. But yet I am as verily perswaded, that great Numbers of People, who are not able, either to disprove me, or to establish any Notions of their own upon clear and rational Grounds, will not be one whit moved ; but stiffly maintain it still, that, let all the World say what they please, there is such a thing as *good* and *ill Luck* in Matters depending upon Chance. They will think, as long as they have a Day to live, that some certain Persons are *fortunate* and *unfortunate* at Games, where *Chance* is thought to govern. They will perhaps confess, that they do not know indeed how to give any distinct Account of this *good* or *ill Luck* ; what it is, or whence it proceeds : But long Experience hath taught them, that such things are but too real and certain. They will agree, that they have not Skill enough to overthrow my Re-

sions to the contrary ; but nothing shall persuade them out of their own Senses ; and the Prejudices they have entertained have to Them all the force of a Demonstration. These are a sort of Men, who, never troubling themselves to argue upon any Matter, go through stitch in all their Opinions, and never take them up, but with a secret Resolution never to quit them more, though for others infinitely better. There is no informing or enlightning of them, and, when you have reasoned with them never so justly, all the answer you are to expect is that of the Country-Fellow to his Priest ; *You may Silence me, but you shall never Convert me.*

I would not be thought to do so weak a thing, as to write this Tract in hopes of gaining these Men over ; But there are Others content to hear Reason, and such as will be satisfied, why they think thus rather than otherwise ; and yet even They find it hard to deliver themselves from the Difficulties objected to them, from Instances of Persons, who almost always win at Play ; where all the Skill in the World is not able to make its Party good against their Luck : And Others again have so ill a Run, that they eternally lose whatever they play for. Almost every Body fancies he knows Instances of these *lucky* or *unlucky* Hands ; and yet I am now taking upon me to prove, that this Objection hath nothing of true weight in it, when rightly considered.

I do not deny, but a Gamester may win, at *Dice*, *Cards*, or other Games, which either turn all upon Chance, or have a mixture of Skill required, for an Hour or two, nay a whole Afternoon, or Night together. I agree in like manner, that there are Some, who with a very few Tickets have got more Prizes in our late Lotteries than Others who have put in ten times as much. And lastly, I am perfectly satisfied, that a great many, on the other side, are as unaccountable Losers in the Instances already mentioned. But now, because they are of different kinds, we must first distinguish rightly between them, before we can make a right Judgment in the Case.

In Cases where *Chance* does all, as in *Dice* and *Lotteries*, supposing Men to have observed carefully, and that there be no Cheating, I dare averr, that no Man was ever known to be constantly, or even a great while together, a *Winner*. There is no Man that hath drawn the *Great Lots*, or such as are of any considerable Value, in several *Lotteries* successively; And several, after some Benefits, depending upon the Continuance of their *Good Luck*, have been so far from improving their Capital, that they have paid dearly for their fond Imagination, when venturing afresh in other *Lotteries*. In this I appeal to what my Readers have known or heard. Now the Great Lots must needs be *Somebody's*; but this *Somebody* would be

very much in the wrong, to think that he is therefore a *Fortunate Person*, that some Quality belongs to him, which shall secure him the like Advantages at other times. There must of necessity be more Losers, than Gainers; and therefore it is very foolish, to conclude a Man's self *Unfortunate*, because he is of the more numerous and probable side. And yet the *Winners* are so exalted, and the *Losers* so enraged, that they are eternally talking of their *Good* or *Ill Luck*, without at all considering what they say.

But now, the Matter is otherwise, in Games, that require any thing of Skill. For here, supposing the Persons to understand the Game, and to mind their Play alike, and to Play fair; I dare undertake, that, though sometimes One of these may Win, and the Other Lose; yet if they Play frequently together, they will give out pretty near equal at last. Now you cannot call One of these *Fortunate* and the Other *Unfortunate*, because in the infinite Turns of *Chance*, each hath his Run of a good Hand, provided they Play often and long. The *Cards* may lye so, that one of them may Win an Hour, an Evening, a Week together; but then the Other will infallibly have his Turn too, though there be no Rule, or certain Order observable, in the *Cards* or *Dice*, which thus wheel about to different sides.

One sensible Evidence of this we have, in the many Gamesters, who have been reputed wonder-

wonderfully *lucky* Players, because used to Win for a great while together, and yet Lose vast Summs all at a clap, and dye at last miserably Poor. Now, What should be the Cause of so sudden and mighty a Change, that the *Good Luck* which kept them company so long should at last forsake them ; and the *Ill Luck*, which had no Power at all over them before, should persecute and undo them, at the end of their Days ? The only Account for this seems to be, that *Chance* may possibly be of Their side, who frequently expose themselves to it, in the whole Course, of their Lives ; and this may happen from the infinite variety of Contingencies, and the prodigious Number of Men who cast themselves continually upon them ; but, though this be possible, 'tis but barely so ; and scarce ever found in Fact, that the same Strain of Fortune sticks by a Man any very long time. It is possible, strictly and absolutely speaking, that a Man in Raffling may throw three *Sixes* twelve times together ; Perhaps this may have been done some Once or Twice, since that Game was invented ; and hath made the Fortune of a very few Gamesters ; but we must own this to have been exceeding rare, and what no Man can reasonably promise himself. So that to talk of *Good* or *Ill Luck* going along with *this* or *that* Person, when among the infinite Hits that depend upon *Chance*, at *Dice* or *Cards* particularly, he happens for some time to come off a Winner, is most ridiculous and absurd.

But

But still we are urged with Instances of Men that usually Win at *Cards*, and have never Lost considerably for many Years; so that these are concluded to be such as *Good Luck* is partial to and fond of; as others again are *Unfortunate* at Play without any mixture of such *Luck* or any turn of the *Cards* in their favour. I pretend not to contest Matter of Fact, but only desire my Reader to be just in this Reflection. I observe then, that we are now speaking of Games, where though *Chance* does a great deal, yet Skill too does as much; for I am not mentioning those Games at present, which are purely casual. If a Man, (for the purpose) Play ill at *Ombre*, he will lose if he play with those that understand the Game better; provided he continue Playing any time; though he may now and then happen to Win, notwithstanding all his Blunders and ill Management. And I affirm, that in this Case, the being Master of the Game is necessary to make a Man *Fortunate*, for without that he will never have *Good Luck* of any long continuance.

A *Lucky Player*, in the vulgar Acceptation of the Word, ought to be One who Plays ill, and yet wins constantly; For, where Men Play with Skill, it is nonsense to talk of *Good Luck*. So that we should distinguish between a *Good Gamester* and a *Lucky one*. The Former is so by Art, the Second only by *Chance*. And yet it is certain, that, generally speaking, the Best Players are the most *Fortunate*.

But

But little Notice is taken of their Skills and a great Noise made of their *Fortune*, and these two are often confounded with one another, of which there may be these among other Reasons. *First*, Because a *Good Player* never loses by his own Fault, whereas an *Ill Player* is guilty of many Slips, and these make him appear more *Unlucky*, because they frequently expose him to lose. *Secondly*, A *Good Player* runs as little Risque as possibly he can, When he hath an ill Hand, and sees no likelihood of Winning, he passes. But he acts quite otherwise, when he hath a sure Hand, or a probable Prospect of Advantage. They that are Masters of such Games as this, know that there is abundance of Good Management requisite to make the best of them ; and such as are not expert at them are often at a loss to find the meaning of *Good Players*, and why they proceed so unaccountably as many times they seem to do. This Contrivance makes them reputed *Fortunate*, though in reality their Success is owing not so much to their *Luck* as to their Conduct and Skill. The Advantage is evident, especially when they Win often ; but their *Good Play* is not so Notorious, nor are any but Men of Judgment qualified easily to discern it.

Now their *Luck* is the thing talk'd of, because Men discourse more of what they know, than of what they know nothing of. And so the masterly and prudent Gamesters, who owe their Gain chiefly to themselves, are termed *Lucky* and thought deeply indebted to *Fortune*.

Just

Just the Reverse of this is the Case of them who Play ill. Their Mistakes are not always so gross, that every Stander-by should be sensible of them ; and therefore their *Losses* are charged upon *Ill Luck* rather than want of Skill. And this is an Opinion which they contribute to themselves. They are loath to pass for *Unskilful Players*, because it is a Reflection, to engage in a Matter he does not understand ; against those who know it better ; for this is to make a Man's self a Cully. And to bring themselves off from the Imputation of this Weakness, they throw all their own Faults upon *Ill Fortune*, and are very industrious to have it believed, that nothing was overseen by Them, which could have made the Event better. And again their Adversaries Winnings are ascribed to Their good *Fortune*, so to take off from that Pleasure, and sometimes from that fantastical Pride and Imaginary Honour, which some People take to themselves upon such Success in Play.

This is the State of *Good Luck* in Play, and all I imagine, who peruse this Chapter attentively, will be convinced that it is so. So that *Good Luck* in this, as well as other Respects, is the Name of an Idea full of Contradiction. The same may be said of *Fortune*, a Word that signifies almost the same thing, though it be frequently used indeed upon other Occasions.

## C H A P. VI.

*Why Good and Ill Destiny and Fortune, and some other such Terms, though they signifie nothing real and positive, should yet continue so long in use. In what Sense the Words, Good and Ill Luck may be admitted.*

**B**efore I proceed to shew, that the Word *Good Luck* signifies nothing at all, in the common use and acceptation of it, I am under a necessity of digressing a little, to remove one Difficulty out of the Way. You will ask, it may be, how it comes to pass, that Words, so empty and insignificant as I pretend these to be, should yet obtain so generally for above two thousand Years together? Is it at all probable, that so many Countries, as distant in Opinion as in Situation; Inhabitants of *Europe, Asia, and Africk*, in so many different Ages, should yet conspire to speak without a Meaning? And ought not rather so general a Consent in using such Words to be taken for a certain Proof, that they have a determinate Idea, and clear Signification?

Now here I might content my self with saying, that, since this Objection overthrows none of those Arguments, by which I have directly proved my Opinion, what I have said is not the less true, though I should not be able to account for this so general Practice and Consent of Mankind. All Masters of Reasoning know very well, that a Man hath done his Work,

Work, when he hath clearly proved the Point he undertakes ; and, That once done, he is not bound to answer every Objection, that may be started against him. But my Reader will find, that at present I have no need of this Answer, being able to give some reasonable Account of the Original and Growth of these Expressions.

Now Three things there are, which gave occasion for inventing these Words ; and These, being common to all Ages and Countries, would not fail to keep them up in common use, after that they were once introduced into the World.

I. The *First* is, that many things are observed to happen every Day, which appear in common Esteem too irregular to be attributed to *Providence*. Virtuous Persons are subject to a thousand Disasters every Moment, and we daily hear and read of Afflicted and *Unfortunate* Virtue. On the other hand, very vile and vicious People are in a State, which provokes our Envy, with regard to these Advantages which are commonly called the Goods of *Fortune*. How many Instances occur in every Age, of Persons highly useful to the Publick, Loved and Honour'd by all that knew or dealt with them, snatched away at a Juncture, when their Country stood most in need of them ; and of Others again, that are justly looked upon as Scourges and publick Plagues, who live long and prosperously ? These are things, which Men durst not a-scribe

scribe to *God*, whom they conceived always to be an infinitely Good and Kind Being ; and hence sprung the Notion, of I know not what fatal Order and Connexion of Causes, which was the Cause of all these Disorders and past even the Divine Power to break or alter its Course. The Writings of Heathen Authors do indeed complain much of their Gods, but then they ever and anon acquaint us withal, that Calamitous Accidents are the Effects of Destiny. The ancient Poets, which are the Body of their Divinity, represent the *Gods* to us, often lamenting that *Fate* which they were not able to prevent : Many Examples whereof might easily be produced, if that were necessary.

Thus *Homer* brings in *Jupiter* deploring the Decree of *Destiny*, that his Son *Sarpedon* was ordained to be killed by *Patroclus*. And hence *Lucian* in his

*Iliad. 2. V.  
433, &c.*

Dialogue, Ζεῦς ἐτεγχόμενος makes a Cynick Philosopher Laugh at *Jupiter*, for being himself subject to that *Fate*, which he could not reverse. And many other like Instances are to be met with in the eighth and ninth Chapters of *Stobæus's Collections of natural Things*.

The most ancient Authors stopped here, and knew nothing of *Fortune*, from whence it comes to pass that the Greek Word which answers to it, is not to be found in *Homer* or *Hesiod*. But afterwards *Fortune* was joyned to *Destiny*, as sharing in Effects esteemed purely casual, and yet impossible not to happen.

The

The first occasion whereof was, probably this; that many things were observed to depend upon Mens Humour and Fancy, of which no other Account could be given, than merely the use of that Liberty and Choice God had given them.

We see Men daily rise to prodigious Honours and Estates, who had neither more Merit to recommend them, nor more Prudence to acquire these, than a thousand other People: Nay who never aspired after, or aimed at them: But all is thrown upon them, by being under some happy Circumstances which they did not foresee, or having had the *luck* to please some humoursome People, who were the Authors of their Advancement, without being able to give a Reason why they were so. Again, Calamitous Accidents happen, which many times cannot be charged upon any Imprudence in the Sufferers, nor lookt upon as Chastisements for any Fault; but are purely cross Hits, occasioned by the peevish and unaccountable Humours of those they had to deal with. Now, when Mens own Senses had demonstrated such things to be the Effects of a Liberty in Man, which it was in his Power to have used after another manner; People began to imagine a Being quite of a different Nature from *Destiny* which they called *Fortune*; and to This they gave the Direction of Matters of this kind. This is a Second Reason why Words of no real Importance have yet continued in common use for

for above two thousand Years. And, since such Occasions as these, which first introduced those Words will certainly recur as long as the World lasts, the Words themselves in all likelihood will be continual to express them so long too.

They that take up with what Men call *Fatality*, will lay every good and evil Event, which happens, and, as they imagine, cannot but happen, at this Door. They will consider these as the Productions of an unknown Power, which nothing can withstand. Others, who cannot bear that all Mankind should be so fast bound up in the *Chains of Destiny*, and observe a thousand fortuitous Events every Day, will be as positive, (though as unintelligible too,) as the former ; and tell you, that all this is the Work of *Fortune*. These are Terms now grown so very familiar, that, should they be exploded, Men would think themselves straitned for necessary Expressions. They are of so great Service both in Poetry and Prose, that Rhetorick would lose one of its fairest Flowers, if *Destiny* and *Fortune* were no more. These and other Words of like Importance carry Musick in the Sound, they strike the Ear, and help Rhyme at a dead lift, so seasonably, so agreeably, that, though never so offensive to Reason, parted with they must not be upon any Terms. And all this is owing to Custom, which, when it hath long obtained, it is to no purpose to strive against.

This

This then might alone suffice to keep up sensless Words in Vogue, in despight of all Argument and Opposition to the contrary. But there is yet a *Third Reason* for it, no less powerful than the former : Which is, that some certain Passions, which Men will never divest themselves of, do naturally dispose them to these kinds of Expressions, except they very strictly guard themselves in this Point. One of these Passions is, the Pleasure Men take in complaining, and bewailing their Case, when unhappy ; and in having somewhat to lay their Misfortunes upon. Were all Disasters and Crosses lookt upon as the Ordinances of a Wise Providence ; or as the Consequence of some Fault or Indiscretion, of our own, Mens Mouths would immediately be stopped in all their Sufferings ; and that delight of bemoaning our hard Circumstances, so commonly taken, and so freely indulged, would be utterly supprest and lost. Some Heathens indeed gave the Gods hard Words, but Others scrupled the doing so ; and Now, to be sure, the Impiety of Complaining against *Providence* directly, would never be endured. So that the Accusations (to evade this offensive Impiety) are levelled at *Destiny* and *Fortune*. These are arraigned of all the Hardships which good and worthy Men lye under, and esteem'd the Actors of all those things, which we think it does not become *God* to do. As may be seen at large in *Stobæus*, Ch. cv. *Concerning Those, who are undeservedly miserable.*

Thus

Thus, when any cross Accident befalls us, we say, How hard it is to be persecuted so by *ill Fortune*, and were there not a Fate in it, which we cannot resist, it would never vex us. Upon every Compliment of Condolence these Complaints are repeated afresh; and always with the same satisfaction. Should the Persons under unhappy Circumstances be debarred solacing themselves with such Expressions, they would think one of their greatest Comforts taken away from them. So usual is it for the Mind of Man to feed upon Air and Emptiness! For, after all, we may as well rail at the Emperour of *China*, or *Japan*, when under any Trouble, as at *Destiny* and *Fortune*: and the farthest King in the *Indies*, hath as great a hand in our Afflictions, as either of Those, according to the vulgar Acceptation of the Words.

There is likewise another Passion, which inclines us to express our Resentments after this manner: That of *Self-love*, I mean, which so hardly suffers us to take the Shame of our Misfortunes, or lay them upon any Fault of our own. We please our selves in seeking for Causes without us; and when we dare not vent our Spleen upon *Providence*, or *Men*, we fall foul upon *Destiny*, or *Fortune*, and think we may say what we will against These, without any danger of being called to an account for it. Our good Success (if we may be believed) is entirely the Effect of our own Prudence and Conduct. But all our Losses and

Dif-

Disappointments come from the over-ruling Power of *Fate*, or the unaccountable Capriciousness of *Fortune*. Nay our very Vices are charged upon these *Phantoms*, instead of ascribing them to the Irregularities of our own Mind or Temper.

\* *Apol. c. i.* Thus \* Tertullian observes, that wicked Men attribute the disorderly Motions of their own Souls, to Destiny, or the Stars.

<sup>† Herald.</sup> <sup>in Tert. A-</sup> And a † learned Commentator shews, that this was the usual Method by which the Heathens excused themselves. Hence *Lucian*,

in a Dialogue between *Eacus*, *Protesilans*, *Melanus* and *Paris*, brings in *Protesilans* laying his Death to *Destiny* rather than his own Rashness; and pretending, that *Fate* ordain'd him to be the first Man that landed before *Troy*. The same *Lucian*, in his *Apology for Learned Men, who put themselves into the Service of Great Men*, tells us, that though he would not take Sanctuary in that Excuse himself, yet it was the common Apology of People, who were at a loss for something to alledge in their own Defence. " Should " (says he) fare ever the better, if I should " own my self in the wrong, and have re- " course to *Fortune*, or the inevitable Neces- " sity of *Destiny*; if I should desire those that " censure me to be favourable, upon a Pre- " tence, that we are not Masters of our own " Actions, but carried away by the Force of a " higher Power, which makes us do things,

" whe-

" whether we will or no ? Upon which Occasion he quotes *Homer*, who in many Passages expresses himself to this purpose.

Now a great part of our Studies consisting in the reading old Heathen Authors, the Beauty of whose Style and Fancy we justly admire, we are insensibly led to speak as they did ; and to imitate the Bad as well as the Good, especially when inspired by the same Passions with them. Thus full of Resentment at our Misfortunes, and full of Self-conceit, instead of acknowledging our Faults, we cast all the Blame upon *Fate* or *Fortune*, the disorderly Proceedings whereof we give lively and very moving Descriptions of. *Fortune*, says an ingenious Person, never appears so blind, as in the Esteem of those, to whom she is not kind. And again, *Fortune governs the Universe.*

Rochf.  
Max. 458.  
Max. 502.

\* *Whatever happens in the World,  
She answers for it all,*

*And all our Scores are placed to her Account.  
If Men be Fools, Imprudent, or Perverse,  
They think themselves absolv'd by blaming Her.  
Fortune in short bears all the Guilt and Scandal.*

\* La Fontaine dans en Fab. de la Fortune & dus Jeun. Enfant.

Il n'arrive rien dans le Monde,  
Qu'il ne faille qu'elle en reponde.  
Nous la faisons de tous écots

Elle

Elle est prise à garand de toutes avantures.  
Est on sot, étourdi, prendon mal ses mesures?  
On pense en être quitte en accusant son fort,  
Bref, La Fortune à toujours tort.

A Merchant, who manages his Affairs dexterously, and gets a large Estate, imputes his Prosperity to his Prudence, but if his Ventures be rash and unsuccesful, does he lay his Losses to himself too? No. This is a Misfortune, for which he is not answerable, because many Others have traded more boldly, and by the Favour of Fortune found their Account in doing so.

\* Un ami le voiant en mauvais equipage,  
Lui dit, d'o vient cela? De la Fortune helas!  
Consoler vous, dit l'autre, & s'il ne lui plait pas  
Que vous soiez heureux, tout au moins soyez sage.  
Je ne scay si'l crût ce conseil  
Mais je scay que chacun impute en cas pareil  
Son bonheur à son industrie,  
Et si de quelque 'Echée notre faute est suivie,  
Nous disons injures au fort.  
Chose n'est ici plus commune,  
Le bien, nous le faisons ; le mal, c'est la Fortune.  
On à toujours raison, le Destin toujours tort.

\* La Fontaine, de l'injustice des hommes envers la Fortune

A Friend, surpriz'd to see him meanly clad,  
Gry'd out, Alas! what makes your Clothes  
so bad?  
"Ti

'Tis my hard Fortune, Sir. Take Courage,  
 Man, said he ;  
 If Fate deny Success, yet Wise you still may be.  
 This is entirely in your own disposal.  
 What good Effect this Counsel had I know not :  
 But this I know ; that all Mankind agree,  
 When Prosperous, to praise their Care and  
 Industry.  
 But if some sudden Blow pursue their Follies,  
 We spare our selves, and lay the blame else-  
 where.  
 The Good is all our own, the Ill is Fortune's,  
 We're ever in the right, Fate ever in the wrong.

Thus the Satisfaction Men feel in Bemoan-ing themselves, and finding out some Excuse for their own Indiscretions, did heretofore give birth to those Phantoms of *Destiny* and *Fortune*, and do still cherish and keep them up in the World. These Passions are so nat-  
 ural, that it is scarce possible to extirpate them out of the Minds of Men. Besides all which there is yet One more, much more blameable, and equally instrumental with the former, to the continuing this unintelligible Jargon in use among us. I mean a Spirit of Envy against those whom we see successful ; which, because it cannot take away from the Advantages they stand posses'd of, endeavours to perswade our selves and others, that these Persons do not excel Them in Merit, of whom they have got the start in Riches or Advancement. We say these things are the

Effect more of their good *Fortune* than their good Conduct; and magnifie their *Luck* with no other design so much, as thereby to lower their commendable Qualities. This was always a reigning Disposition, and many Instances of it are to be found in the 104th Chapter of *Stobæus*, concerning those who have been undeservedly *Fortunate*. Attend but diligently to the Discourse, when any Man that hath risen greatly in the World is talked of, and you shall daily find more of these ill-natur'd Examples, than a good Man would be pleased with. Reflect a little with your self upon those whom you know more than ordinarily successful, and you shall find a strong Inclination, even in your own Breast, to impute most of these Persons Happiness, more to *Fortune*, than to their own Prudence or Desert.

These are the Temptations Men lay under to take the Government of Humane Affairs out of the Hands of *Providence*, and give it to *Destiny* and *Fortune*. Those Chimæra's, that have been adored for two thousand Years, even among the most learned and refined Nations, sometimes in Temples, but always in Mens Hearts and secret Thoughts: These are the Idols, to which Ignorance and Discontent, Self-love and Envy, did ever, and do still too often, sacrifice Piety and good Sense, Patience and Charity.

But still I expect to be thought an un-re-

reasonable Man for attempting to banish these Words out of Conversation ; And the rather, because the World know not how to dispense with the want of them ; As I my self seem in effect to confess, by making so frequent use of them, in this very Discourse directed against them ; Which certainly would not have been done, could I conveniently have express'd my self without them. In return to this, I have two things to offer. The *First* is, that I was obliged in attacking the vulgar Signification of these Words, to take them as the Vulgar do, in order to make my self clearly understood. The *Other* is, that I allow these Words capable of a very good Sense, provided we confine them to Events already past. A Man, without any Absurdity or Impropriety at all, may say, that such a one *hath* had *good* or *ill Luck*, that he *hath* been *Fortunate* or *Unfortunate* ; but if a Man will speak sensibly and intelligibly, he cannot say, that any Person *is*, or *will be*, the One or the Other. This at first hearing may sound like a Paradox ; but it is as certain with regard to the Importance of the Words, as it is in respect of the Truth of the thing. *Solon* is said to declare, that no Man could truly be called happy before his Death ; because of the many Changes in Humane Affairs, and the Uncertainty of what may happen hereafter, which no body can foresee or answer for. Thus it is with Words too. When

*Herodot. l. 1.*

we say, that such a one *bath been fortunate*, this means no more, than that some things have fallen out to his advantage ; and then the Importance of the Word is confined to the Event only. This Idea in such a Case is very clear ; because it agrees exactly with that which we conceive of any sort of gainful Events. But when we say a Man *is or will be fortunate*, this undertakes to point out something belonging to that Person, which causes such Advantages to happen to *Him* rather than to *Others*. And in this Sense it is, that I contend, and I think have proved, the Terms of *Fortunate* and *Good Luck* to be meerly notional, and of no significance at all.

So that, upon the whole Matter, those Words are not to be used upon *Some Occasions*, if a Man would speak rationally and intelligibly ; and upon *Others* they may be very well admitted, and have a clear and distinct Sense belonging to them.

### C H A P. VII.

*That Mens Good and Bad Angel are not the Cause of their Good or Ill Luck, in Gaming and Lotteries.*

**M**any of the ancient Heathens were of opinion, that Each Person at his Birth had a *Good* and *Evil Genius* assigned him ; and that the *Good* used his utmost Endeavour

deavours for his Benefit, while the *Other* laboured as hard for his Ruine. They pretended too, that, if a Man won at Play, this was owing to the Influence and Power of his *good Genius*; So that He, whose good Genius was superiour to His with whom he engaged, would infallibly come off Conquerour. Now, whatever Objections this Opinion may be liable to, thus much at least must be granted in its favour, that it is intelligible; which the two former are not. For we find no difficulty in conceiving it possible, for an Intelligent Being of greater Power than Man, and whose Operations are invisible, to make what Changes it shall please in the Motion of certain Bodily Substances; as Cards, or Dice, or Tickets, or any thing of that kind; and all this to be done, in such a manner as we can neither perceive nor obstruct.

And yet it must be confess'd, that this Opinion hath no Foundation, but what They who advanced it at pleasure were pleased to give it. It is worth our Observation, how Plutarch mentions it, in his Book concerning the Fortune of the Romans: "Anthony and Au-  
 " gustus visiting often, and being very fami-  
 " liar, used to divert themselves at Ball, or  
 " Dice, or with fighting of Quails and Cocks,  
 " but Anthony was always worsted. One of  
 " his Family, who pretended to Divination,  
 " is said hereupon to give him this Advice.  
 " Why, Sir, will you have any thing to do

" with this young Man ? pray avoid him.  
 " You have gained more Reputation , are  
 " Superior to him in Years , have more For-  
 " ces under your Command , are more expe-  
 " rienced in the Art of War ; But your Ge-  
 " nius is afraid of his ; your Fortune , though  
 " in it self great , flatters and truckles to his ;  
 " and , if you do not decline him , will in  
 " time forsake you , and desert to him . The  
 same Relation is repeated in *Anthony's Life* ,  
 and the Person who gave this Counsel said  
 to be an Ægyptian .

The same Author in his *Brutus* tells us , that  
 " a little before he brought his Army over  
 " into Europe , as he was sitting one Night  
 " pensive , somewhat seemed to come to his  
 " Tent , and turning about , he saw an Ap-  
 " parition of a horrible Form , which stood  
 " by him without speaking a word . *Brutus*  
 " had the Courage to accost it in these words ,  
 " What Man , or what God art Thou ? To which  
 " the Apparition replied , I am thy evil Genius ,  
 " Brutus , and will meet thee at Philippi . He  
 says too , that the same Form appeared to him  
 again , the Day before the Battel fought , near  
 that City ; which presaged his Defeat and  
 Death . I make no Reflections upon this Pas-  
 sage ; What I have quoted being sufficient to  
 shew the Opinion of the Heathens in this Mat-  
 ter ; and several \* learned Per-

\* See Casp. Barth. Col-  
 lections up-  
 on the Itine-  
 rary of Rutilius Furtmatianus , V. 328.

I do not find that any of the Moderns think each Man hath, not only a *good*, but an *evil, Genius*; and much less any such *Genius* as concerns it self in their winning or losing in Play, or Lotteries. In truth all that the Pagans advanced in this Matter was wholly fanciful and groundless; and what *Plutarch* relates of *Anthony's Egyptian*, seems to be no more than a Cheat of that *Egyptian*; Who had a mind to give his Master some Account, how it came to pass that he always came off with loss, when engaging in Play with *Augustus*. As for *Brutus* his Apparition, if I should say it was a meer Fable, I do not see how any body can disprove me.

If any one should think fit to maintain, that the *good Angel*, to whom God hath given the Charge of his Person, (according to the Opinion of some ancient Writers, and of some Christians in our time) is Sollicitous for his Winning, in such Cases where *Chance* is supposed to have place; A thousand Questions might be put to such a Man, which he would find himself greatly at a loss to answer. For instance; Admitting, that God hath entrusted each Person to the Care of a Guardian Angel, it may be demanded, how he knows, that, when he wins, this Angel is the Cause of it? Who ever told him so? or, How did he come by this Knowledge? For certainly a Man may win by the accidental concurrence of some things, which must of necessity favour some of those that are enga-

ged in Play, or that have put *Tickets* into Lotteries. But that These should favour this or that Man in particular, we have no more pretence to call the Doing of an *Angel*, than the Effect of *Chance*. It may be again questioned, wherefore a Man's good *Angel* should procure him Money, and not rather a good Understanding, or Piety, or Virtue, of which many great Winners stand at least as much in need, as many great Losers? One would be glad to know too, of what Order this *Angel* is, that can help his Charge to Money, but not to the better Endowments of the Mind; and why he should rather chuse to furnish him with the One, than with the Other? These and many other such Enquiries can never receive a satisfactory Answer. And therefore Men had better say nothing, than run into a Heathen Notion, which pretended that Mens good Genius was the Cause of all their good Fortune; Because this is a Notion altogether fantastical, and clogged with insuperable Difficulties. So that, without enlarging any farther upon this Head, I shall proceed to examine the *Fourth* pretended Cause of Mens good, or ill Luck.

## C H A P. VIII.

*That God does not by any particular Determinations of his Divine Will, ordain Good Luck to Some, and Ill Luck to Others, in cases of Play and Lotteries.*

They who do not think fit to ascribe their *Good* or *Ill Luck* in matters depending upon *Chance*, to *Destiny* or *Fortune*, or to the overruling Power of their *Good* or *Evil Genius*, generally take shelter in the *Providence* of *Almighty God*; Who, as they imagine, does in a very particular Manner preside over, and dispose, all things where Hazard and Lots are concerned. This Opinion too is what we may conceive and understand the meaning of; and at first blush carries a Face of Piety. Whereas the *first* and *second* are altogether unintelligible, and the *third* is in no degree probable. And yet I am bold to say, that This hath not a much firmer Foundation than the rest, and that it does not make for the Honour of Providence, as People fondly imagine. But in this Argument it is fit I allow my self a larger Scope, than I have hitherto done; both in respect to that vast Number of Persons, who have entertained it; and in due reverence to the Holy Scripture, upon which it is thought to be grounded.

Now first of all it is absolutely necessary to know exactly what this Proposition imports, *God is the Author of Good and Ill Luck in matters*

ters depending upon Chance. For it is capable of Three very different Interpretations, and therefore we must carefully distinguish between these, in order to be rightly understood.

*First.* It may mean, not that God interposes after any particular manner, in Favour of this or that Person, so as positively to determine the Event to his Advantage by a peremptory Decree, but only that God, having made all things, and preserving them in that Order they are in, and managing them as his Wisdom sees fit ; these Casual Events like all others, are to be looked upon as an Effect of his *General Providence*. Thus we say commonly, that God gives us, and takes away from us, our Children, our Friends, our Estates ; intending hereby not any miraculous or supernatural Operation, by which his Providence gives or takes away these things ; but only that we acknowledge every thing that happens to us, to be an Effect of his Direction and Governance of the World. And in this respect God is truly said to be the Cause of every thing, excepting only the Evil of Sin, which proceeds from the voluntary depravation of the Humane Nature. Thus we may, and ought to ascribe to God any *Good Fortune* that happens to us, whether by matters depending upon Chance, or any other way whatsoever : though we do not think, that he interposes after any particular or extraordinary manner, for the determining of them.

Se-

*Secondly.* This Proposition imports, that God, knowing before-hand all that happens, in every kind, and having it in his Power to hinder any part of it, would not however put a stop to, or divert the Course of Natural Causes, to hinder the *good Luck* thus about to happen to any Person, and that for special Reasons. Tho' we cannot positively affirm, that God had no such Reasons in his Eye, because this is what we know nothing of; Nor can we affirm that he had, at least, except God should please to reveal them to us, or that we could fairly infer this by the Consequences of those Effects. For the purpose. The Great Lots lately drawn in *England* and *Scotland* are the Effects of Chance; in the disposal whereof it is possible God might have some particular Reasons inducing him to give them to Those particular Men; but it is possible too, that he might not act upon any such particular Reasons. He hath not revealed to us any thing of the Matter; And the Consequences of that Advantage, which some Persons gained, have not produced Effects considerable enough to incline us to think, that God had any particular Reasons for ordering those *Benefits* to those that enjoy them.

*Thirdly.* This Proposition may signify, that God does interpose in casual Events after so particular a manner, that he acts by an immediate Power and Providence in the Production of them. And this is the usual Acceptation of the Words; for otherwise Men have

have no reason to say, that God presides over Lots, and casual Events in any more particular manner, than he does over all natural Effects whatsoever. Now I am so far from denying, that God can, that I am well content to allow, that he does, upon several Occasions, interpose after so extraordinary a manner, as to make the Lot fall upon some certain Persons, upon whom possibly it would not have fallen, without such Interposition. I shall explain my self by some Examples of this kind by and by. But the thing I contend for is, that, generally speaking, we cannot make God the *immediate Author* of good and ill Luck, so as that he should bring this about by any supernatural and extraordinary Operation. I am aware of one Passage in the Old Testament, usually produced for Proof of the contrary Opinion; But I hope to make it clear, that it does not at all answer that purpose: when I have first laid down the Reasons, which induce me to believe, that, generally speaking, God does not direct or concern himself with the Events of this kind, more particularly than he does with those of any other kind whatsoever.

*First.* I averr this Opinion to be, A Supposition taken up without any Ground; For I shall shew presently, that there is nothing in Scripture to support it. So that they who hold it have no other Refuge left, than to prove it by the Consequences of such Events.

Now these Consequences, as I said before,  
are

are not of such Importance, that the *Finger of God* should commonly be thought visible in them. If the General Good of a Nation or Kingdom, or of some Persons eminently serviceable to the Publick, were the Result of such Events, we then might probably conclude, that God was more than ordinarily concerned to promote such good Effects. But nothing of this kind yet appears, nay we see, quite contrary, that several, upon whom these *Benefits* have fallen, make no other use of them, than to be more profuse and vain in their Expences, and make them either minister to their Pride, or increase their Avarice. And can any Man of common Sense suppose, that God hath gone out of his Way, as it were, and wrought Miracles, for the Advantage of the Vain, and the Covetous ?

*Secondly.* If God act after a particular manner in Casual Events, he either does it in *All*, or in *Some* such only. If in *Some* only, let them be specified, and let it be proved, that such an *Immediate Operation* does not extend to the rest. Now this is a Point never to be decided, but by express Revelation, or at least by Arguments drawn from Effects worthy of so particular a Providence. Without one of these Proofs it is to no purpose to advance any such Distinction. Now if God preside thus over *all* such Events, and direct them by a positive and particular Act of his Will ; it will follow from hence, that God works Miracles every Day, for the sake  
of

of Men, who, it is but too plain, are not worthy of them: and in Places, where we could hardly suspect, that God should take any delight in exhibiting his Presence after an extraordinary manner. They that play at *Cards* and *Dice* would at this rate engage God to declare for them by perpetual Wonders; and the Groom-porters, and Gaming-houses would have infinitely more Miracles wrought in them, than ever the Temple it self, or any other place had, though we should take in all that stand upon Record, or were ever done under the Old and New Testament. I cannot tell, whether such Consequences as these will go down with Others, but, for my own part, I declare freely, that there are very few things, which I find myself less disposed to believe, than, that God works Miracles of this kind every Day for Gamesters. *Lotteries* indeed are nothing near so frequent as *Games*, but it is every whit as improbable, that God should particularly interest himself in These, as in Those. For, if the Placing of the *Tickets* be not the Effect of Chance, but of a particular Providence; then every *Ticket* drawn presents us with a fresh Miracle. And as oft as Men shall take a fancy to set up new *Lotteries*, God will be obliged (if I may have leave to say so) to come down from Heaven, and regulate the Order of the *Tickets*: He by his positive Assignment will dispense the Money to some, and not to others; without any visible

sible reason of this difference, whether we regard the Qualifications of the Persons, or the Use they make of it. Will those that have drawn the most considerable *Benefits* have the Confidence to say, that their Merit was so much Superiour to Theirs, who had only *Blanks*, as to give them a better Title to the Favour of Heaven; or have we any reasonable Assurance, that this Success will dispose them to be more beneficent and charitable for the future? This is an Enquiry which I charge upon their own Conscience to answer, and what Time must inform us in. As for what is already past, we may venture to say, boldly, that, as the Persons on whom *the Tower of Siloam* Luke 13. fell are declared by our Saviour not to have been the greatest Sinners which dwelt at Jerusalem; so They who have gained most by the *Lotteries* are not better Men, than They who lost all.

Upon these Considerations it must be allowed me, that They, who attribute the *fortunate* and *unfortunate* Events to particular Persons to such an immediate Providence, are in great danger of being greatly mistaken. These things may either of them be, and often are, the Effects of an extraordinary Blessing from above. But then the Case is the same here again, with that I mentioned just now. We must not think the Persons whom we are pleased to style *Fortunate* or *Unfortunate*, to be such, as God is obliged (if I may

so speak) to succeed, or to defeat and disappoint in their Designs. For *as God causes his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good*, so does he suffer These things to happen to all sorts of Men without distinction.

After attending diligently to what hath been now said, it will be no hard matter to discover the true Importance of that Passage in Scripture, usually produced to prove, that God is the Author of all Casual Events. *The Lot*, says Solomon, *is cast into the Lap*; that is, into the Hollow of a Vessel ordered for that purpose; but *the whole Disposing* or Decision of *it is of the Lord*. When any thing was to be determined by *Lots*, they took a Vessel, into which each Person cast his own Mark; The Vessel was then shaken lustily, and that which came first out signified, that He whose Lot it was, ought to have the thing assigned to that Lot, if the Division of any Possessions were the Matter to be determined. This Circumstance is necessary to be observed, for the explaining the first Words of the Verse, though They have no relation to the Nature of *Lots* or *Chance* in general, or considered in it self. Therefore the thing we are concerned for at present, is, only to know the meaning of the last Words, *The whole Disposing thereof is of the Lord*.

Now these Words are capable but of Two Senses. Either they mean, that God by a po-

positive and particular Act of his Will, constantly, determines this casual Event, or Lot, to some certain Side, whatever kind that Event or Lot be of; or else it intends only thus much; that Men have no Hand at all in Ordering these Productions, but they are the Result of a general Providence, without any extraordinary Interposition of God in this Affair. Which Mode of Expression is very agreeable to the Hebrew Forms, which are wont to ascribe to God all those things, to which Men contribute nothing, and such as depend upon, and result from, his General Providence only.

They who prefer the *former* Signification, oblige themselves to answer all the Objections, to which I have already proved it liable; And These, I confess, are such as I know no Answer for. Now a Man must never interpret Scripture in a Sense, which will never bear, except you first swallow down and take Absurdities for granted.

And therefore I conceive it is necessary to stick to the *second*. So that Solomon meant no more, but that Men have no Power in Disposing of Casual Events. And thus the Hebrews frequently express themselves. They say, for example, that the Trees which grow upon Mountains, or Numb.24.6. in places never planted, or cultivated by Men, were planted of God. Thus Balaam, when he beheld the Line of the Israelites Camp, says, *As the Valleys are they spread forth,*

forth, as the Gardens by the River's side, as the Trees of Ligmaloes (an Aromatick Tree) which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar-trees beside the Waters. And the Psalmist, The Trees

of the Lord are full of Sap, even the Psalm 104. Cedars of Libanus which he hath plant-

ed. Now there is no concluding from hence, that God interposed after an extraordinary manner, for the making those Trees grow. But it was an Effect of his Providence, which at the first Creation of the World did indeed bring forth Plants by a miraculous Act of his Power; so that each kind should afterwards spring and breed of themselves; and afterwards preserved them without any new Miracle.

The same People used to call Psalm 104. 6. Thunder God's Voice; By which

they did not mean, that it never thundred without a Miracle; but thus awfully to express that terrible Noise and Commotion, made in a Place which Men cannot reach to, and consequently the Effect of his Providence, who made all things. I do not undertake to affirm, that it did, or does never thunder, by an Effect of God's particular Interposition; but I say, that generally Thunder is bred in the Air, without God's intervening more particularly in this, than he does in other Natural Effects. In the 29th Psalm, where we have a Poetical Description of the Effects of Thunder, it is said, that the Voice of the Lord break-

breaketh the Cedars of Libanus, that it makes the Mountains to skip like a Calf, and like a young Unicorn. And yet no body thinks, that God works Miracles to throw down Trees, or to make a ratling among the Rocks. But the meaning is, that None of these things are done by Humane Power, but are the Effects of a Divine Providence. This Idiom once establish'd, gave occasion for the wise Men and Poets of the Hebrew Nation, to carry that Expression beyond its first Signification, and, by a Rhetorical Figure, to introduce God thunders in Person. Thus Job, speaking of Thunder, says, *Hear his Voice with trembling, and the Sound that goeth out of his Mouth.* Now, strictly speaking, God does not act more particularly in the Noise of Thunder, than in the Humming of a Gnat or Fly; and this latter, if curiously attended to, is more wonderful than the former.

Thunder, when Philosophically considered, is nothing else, but a violent and sudden Concussion of the Air, caused by the quick kindling of an Exhalation of a Sulphurous and Nitrous Composition, or somewhat of that kind. Our Muskets and great Ordinance are no ill Imitation of it, and the Crack of *Aurum fulminans* is yet a nearer Resemblance of the thing. If a great quantity of Artillery were discharged, or of *Aurum fulminans* kindled, upon a Mountain,

tain, without the Persons below knowing any thing of the Matter, they would certainly think it Thundred. But a Fly or a Bee is a wonderful Creature, which Men know not how to imitate the Frame of. The Motion of this little-winged Machine, the Order and Symmetry of its Parts, the Use it makes of them, the Circulation of that Inix which supplies the place of Blood, and all that we observe in it, is truly admirable: and we could as easily raise the Dead, as form such an Insect as this. Were I to speak as a Philosopher, I would rather say, the *Flies of God*, than call *Thunder* the *Voice* or *Word of God*. But the Vulgar, judging of things, by the Noise and strong Impression they make, and by their Inability to change them, are surprized and tremble at Thunder; whereas they despise a Fly, because it makes but little Noise, and they can kill it at pleasure. Upon this account Thunder is esteemed the *Lord's immediate Doing*, while Flies are pretended to breed by Chance, and to come out of Putrefaction. This is almost the same Extravagance, as it would be to suppose the Concurrence of some Intelligent Being necessary to discharge a Canon; but to think a House well built and furnished, to be the Work of Chance. Many ingenious Persons have confuted this Errour so substantially, that I need insist no longer upon it; nor could I conveniently do so, without

out digressing too far from the Subject I am now upon.

The Hebrews call the Rain-bow the *Bow of God*, because it appears on high in the Air, and is exceeding beautiful in the variety of its Colours; though all this be an Effect of his general Providence. A Prism of Glass, or a *Fet' d'Eau*, look'd upon with our Back to the Sun, will convince us, that no Supernatural Operation is needful to form the Rain-bow, in drops of Rain.

Gen. 9. 12.

From hence methinks I might infer, that Solomon, in saying the *Distributing of the Lot is of the Lord*; intends no more, than that this is one Effect of his General Providence, and such as Men themselves have no part in. So that They, who argue for a Particular Providence from this Passage, in These rather than Other Matters, are led into that Mistake by their Ignorance of the Propriety of the Hebrew Language. Not that I deny God upon some Occasions to have interposed, as they contend; but then this was upon special and weighty Occasions, and such as he himself had appointed. Thus God commanded *Joshua* to divide the Land of *Canaan* to the Israelites by Lot; and I make no doubt but God so directed those Lots, that each

*See Grot.  
on Prov. 16.  
33.*

*Numb. 26.  
55, 56.*

*Gen. 49.  
Deut. 33.*

Tribe

Tribe should have that Portion fore-told by *Jacob* and *Moses*. And thus again in the Case of *Jonah*, he discovered by drawing of Lots, which of the Passengers was the cause of that extraordinary Storm, which then distressed them, as we may read in the first Chapter of that Prophet.

*Jonah* 1.  
*Acts* 1.

But these are rare and extraordinary Cases, such as must not be drawn into Precedent, or made a general Rule; for, at this rate, every Decision by Lots would be a certain Oracle from Heaven, to which we might apply securely, and rest upon, in our Doubts and Necessities. If any Man desired to be satisfied, whether a thing be true or false, he need only take two Pieces of Paper, and write upon the one, *This is True*, and upon the other, *This is False*; or some Inscription to that purpose, and the first drawn would have the Force of a Revelation from Heaven. If a Man were in pain to know, whether any of the Family had stolen Goods that are missing, this were a ready and certain Method for discovery. Take but two Tickets inscribed, the One *Stolen by a Servant*, the Other *Not Stolen*, and this would be the Answer of an Oracle; after which nothing more need be done, than to put in the Names of the whole Family, and that which comes out first gives you the Malefactor infallibly. If a Man were

. to

to Undertake a thing, and doubted the Success ; it is but consulting this Oracle again ; and, its Determination never deceiving any one, Men might have the satisfaction of never attempting any thing in vain. In short, nothing could be contrived more convenient than this, for infinite Occurrences of Humane Life, were the Notion upon which it is founded just and true.

This would likewise be an Evidence of the Existence of a God, so clear and strong, as must needs stop the Mouth of every Atheist in the World ; could it be proved, that by praying to God, and drawing Lots, a Man might at any time receive a certain Answer, concerning things which no Humane Wisdom is able to discern.

## C H A P. IX.

*That Those, who believe God presides over Casual Events in so particular a manner, think of him as the Heathen did.*

A fter having proved, that there is no sufficient Ground for pretending Scripture, and the Opinion of th<sup>e</sup> People of God heretofore, for the belief of God's presiding over Casual Events, in a more than common manner ; It may not be amiss to shew, how

how this Notion borders upon an Errour of the Heathens, diffused East and West among the Nations most infamous for Superstition. So vain is the Boast of Persons thus prepossess'd, that they have more just and exalted Notions of Divine Providence, than Others who reject this Opinion.

To begin at the East. The *Arabians*\*, who were generally addicted to Divination, made great use of Casual Decisions upon this Occasion, till forbidden to do so by *Mahomet*. I will give you an Example out of their own Authors. When a Man designed a long Journey, or Marriage, or any thing of consequence, he took three Arrows. Upon the first was inscribed, *My Lord hath commanded me*; upon a second, *My Lord hath forbidden me*: the third had no Inscription at all. These were all put into a Quiver, and afterwards one drawn unseent. If the first was drawn, the Design was pursued, as approved by God. If the second, the Person desisted: If the third blank Arrow, then it was put in again, and they proceeded to a second Drawing, till one of the others with a *Motto* offered itself. To make this Ceremony the more Solemn, a Priest before the drawing used this Prayer; *Grant, O God, that that Arrow which is most for this Person's Benefit may be drawn, and that he may rest in that Determination.*

\* See Ed.  
Pocock's  
*Specim.*  
*Hist. Arab.*  
p. 323, &c.

This was no late Custom in those Eastern Parts; for *Ezekiel* takes notice of the King of Babylon's using it in his Time. *The King of Babylon stood at the parting of the Way, at the head of the two Ways, to use Divinations: He made his Arrows bright, (or as some render it) he mingled his Arrows, he consulted with Images, he looked in the Liver.* St. Jerome explains this Passage with Allusion to the Custom I am now describing. "He shall stand in the way, says he, to consult the Oracle, according to the manner of his Country. He shall put his Arrows into the Quiver, and mingle them together; so that each of them shall be Inscribed with the Name of a City, and that City, whose Name is upon the Arrow first drawn, he shall besiege."

The Greeks also thought they could be informed in future Events, by such kind of Divinations. "Thus in a Grove near *Bura* in *Achaia*, there was a Statue of *Hercules*, which was consulted by Lots. He that asked Counsel of the God, makes his Vows, (*says Pausanius*) before the Statue; after which he takes Dice, of which there lay a great number, and throws four upon the Table. Upon each Die are certain Figures, the Explanation of which were there upon a Board: According to that Explanation, the Person either Prosecuted, or quitted his Design.

*Ezekiel*

xxi. 21.

*Hierom in  
Com.**Pausan. A.  
achaia. L. v.*

II p. 449.

The same Method obtained in Consulting the famous Oracle of *Dodona*, as is plain from this Passage in *Cicero*. "The *Lacedemonians* looked upon that as a mighty Prodigy, which happened to them, when consulting *Jupiter* of *Dodona* concerning the Victory they then hoped to obtain. The Ambassadors having set down the *Tessellum*, in which the Lots were put, a Favorite Ape of the King of the *Molossi* overturned the lots, and confounded all their Preparations for drawing. Whereupon the Prophetess of *Delphi* told them that this was Ominous news to the *Lacedemonians*, and that they must therefore think, not how to vanquish the Enemy, but how to secure themselves.

At *Praeneste* in *Italy*, there was a Celebrated Somer Oracle of *Fortune*, which denoted good and Bad Success by Lots. The same Author acquaints us, that there was a Box of Olive Wood, in which the Lots were put, which were Dice, or Bones somewhat like that Figure. The manner of consulting the Oracle was, to have those Dice cast before the Statue, or else by a little Child drawing them out of the Box. Which *Tullius* roundly makes very merry with in his second Book of *Divination*. What is, says he, this Lot? It is like playing at Dice, or at Even or Odd, where *Quæstus* Chance, and not Prudence or Reason Governs. What Certainty can be expected from Lots, shaken together and drawn by a Child, just as Fortune shall direct? What this Direction of Fortune was we are much in the dark; but 'tis plain

she was consulted by this Method of Lots. Hence the *Latins* gave all sorts of Oracles the Name of *Sortes*; and they who consulted them were called *Sortilegi*, from whence probably the modern Word *Sorcerer* is derived; which signifies a Conjurer or Magician.

The Antients had one kind of *Lots* more, which they consulted in different manners. Sometimes they Wrote some Verses of a Famous Poet upon several Tickets, which were in sense near those Answers which they expected to receive from the Oracle, to be informed in the Matter they desired to know. These were put into a Vessel, and shaken together, and that Ticket which was drawn, was received as the Answer to their Doubts. Sometimes these Verses were Written upon a Board, under certain Numbers; after which the Dice determined that Number which they were concerned in. Sometimes they opened a Book at a venture, and the first Verse they stopped upon passed for the Oracle. Thus *Acetpartian* tells us, that *Adrian*, while yet a private Person, opened *Virgil's Aeneid*, and found those Verses, which presaged his future advancement to the Roman Empire.

*Quis procul ille autem ramis insignis olive  
Sacra ferens? nō se crines, incanaque mentis  
Regis Romani.*

But who's the Man that from afar appears,  
His Head with Olive Crown'd, his Hand a  
Censer bears!

*His Hoary Hair, and holy Vestments bring  
The lost Idea back, I know the Roman King.*

So likewise Lampridius says, that Alexander Severus having consulted the *Sortes Virgiliana* fell upon this among other Verses.

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, mensen-  
to.*

*Roman, 'tis thine alone with equal Sway,  
To rule Mankind, and make the World Obey.*

Another time as Heliogabalus was contriving his Death; this Verse came up in the Temple of Fortune at Praeneſte.

*Si qua fata aspera rumpas.*

*Tu Marcellus eris.*

*And could'ſt thou break through Fates sever-  
Decree,*

*A new Marcellus should arise in thee.*

The Christians, who, upon some occasions came little short of the Pagans in Superstition made use of the Holy Scripture to the same purpose. St. Augustin in his \* Confessions, gives this Account of him

\*L. viii. c. 2. self. "As I was weeping in the bitterness of my Soul, I heard a Voice in the next House (whether Male or Female I know not) repeating several times, and singing aloud, Tolle lege; Tolle, lege. Take up and Read. At first my Countenance changed, and I began to consider, whether some Children might not sing these words in play; but I could not collect

"collect that I had ever heard them do so.  
 "Then checking my Tears, I rose, and conclud-  
 "ed that it was an Admonition from God, or-  
 "dering me to take the Book, and read the  
 "Chapter that first offered it self at the open-  
 "ing. For I had heard of St. *Anthony*, that  
 "accidentally Reading in the Gospel, he took  
 "what he Read there as a Command Addres-  
 "sed to himself in particular. The  
 "Passage was, *Go, sell what thou Matt. xix.*  
 "*hast and give to the Poor, and then thou shalt*  
 "*have treasure in Heaven, and then come and fol-*  
 "*low me.* By this Oracle he was Converted.  
 "I went then directly to the Place where  
 "Alypius was; for there I had left St. Paul's  
 "Epistles. When I arose I took and  
 "opened them, and Read the first Rom. xiii. 12.  
 "Clause I saw, which was, *Walk not in Rioting*  
 "*and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wan-*  
 "*toness.* I Read no further, for there was no  
 "occasion; this Passage having filled my  
 "Heart with a Light that confirmed me, and  
 "scatter'd all my dark Doubts, I shut the  
 "Book; but keeping my Finger, or leaving a  
 "Mark in the place, I told the thing to *Aly-*  
 "*pis* with great Satisfaction. He related to  
 "me what had happened to himself of the like  
 "nature; which till then I was a Stranger to.  
 "He asked to see the Passage, he did, and pau-  
 "sing upon it, he was desirous to see Rom. xiv. 1.  
 "what followed, which I had not  
 "attended to. That was, *Him that is weak*  
 "in

" in the Faith receive ye; and this he applied  
" to himself.

St. *Augustin* indeed did not approve this Method of consulting Scriptures, except in Matters purely Spiritual. In a Letter

*Ep. cxix.*

to *Januarium*, he says, " As for those  
" that consult the Scripture by way of Lot,  
" (*de paginis Evangelicis sortes legunt*) though  
" it were rather to be wished, that they did  
" thus, than that they should run to evil Spi-  
" rits for Advice, yet I cannot be reconciled to  
" the Custom. When the Matters of the  
" World, and the Vanities of this present Life  
" are concerned, Men should not wrest  
" those Oracles which treat of Another.

Some † Learned Men have col-  
† P. Allen de  
Graeculis, p.  
369. l. 1.  
lected divers Passages, which evi-  
dently shew this to have been a  
common Practice among the Chris-  
tians for some considerable time. I shall sa-  
tisfie my self at present with making some few  
Remarks upon those produced by me here al-  
ready.

First, then, I observe, that this Practice of Consulting by Lot upon the casual opening of a Book, was Originally a *Heathen* Custom, and that there is no Foundation for it in Reason. For, whoever told the *Pagans*, that God would answer them in such a way, or that he would so order the Matter, that they should be sure to dip upon that critical Place, which should contain a Resolution of their Doubts? Can it be urged that this Perswasion proceeded from

from a certain Knowledge of God's particular Direction of casual Events? I shall not here repeat what hath already been delivered upon this Subject; but I am positive, that admitting the thing to be true, yet even so it is not possible to prove that the *Heathens* could have any certain Knowledge of this kind.

It will perhaps be replyed, that they know this pretended Truth by the Event, having observed by abundance of Instances, that these Answers by this way of Consultation were actually fulfilled. To this I answer, that if this was a sure way of consulting the Deity, it is not sufficient that it succeeded in *many* Instances; but it must never have failed in *any one*. If what presents it self first at the opening of a Book upon such a Design, must always pass for an Oracle, the Event must constantly answer, to justifie that Opinion, otherwise there is no depending upon it; and this will be in no better condition than the other ways of Divination, which have hit right sometimes, and by mere *chance*. It is no strange thing, that some out of a very great many of these prodigious Predictions should come true; and in the present case, we may the more easily conceive it possible they should do so, because the words are capable of different Constructors, and may with a little Address be applied to different Events. When Men found themselves deceived, those Answers were either forgotten, or at least not Published to the World; but when they fell in pat to the purpose, then

they were told at every turn, and the Memory of them endeavoured to be made Eternal. Hence we meet in History with so many Examples of Divinations which succeeded, and with so very few of those by which Men have been miserably deluded.

*Secondly,* There needs no deep Reason presently to convince Men, how exceeding vain all these pretended Oracles must needs be. Let us but draw out a Scheme of Enquiries, what shall happen the next Campaign, and consult *Homer* and *Virgil* upon each of these Queries. Let us afterwards Write down these Resolutions, and compare them with the Events. This is an easie and effectual way for Men to undeceive themselves in these Matters, and such as those People are capable of, who are not of a pitch for regular Arguing.

*Thirdly,* It must be allowed me, that the Christians, who instead of *Heathen* Poets made use of the Holy Scriptures with the same design, had no express Revelation to assure them that God would answer them this way. Now it is absur'd to suppose that God will answer us by Methods, which he hath told us nothing of; nay, such as we take upon us to prescribe to him, and in doing so, tread in the Steps of *Pagan Idolatry* and Superstition. For notwithstanding all St. *Augustin* says, and the Instances he produces, we can have no assurance that God answers Men after this manner.

I expect it will be urged, that somewhat like this happened to our Blessed Lord in the Synagogue at Nazareth, on the Sabbath day. Where when he rose up, the Book of the Prophet *Esaias* was presented unto him, and he opened the Book upon that Passage, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, &c.* And, after he had shut the Book, he said, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears.* Now I make no question, but it was by the direction of a particular Providence, that *Jesus Christ* opened upon that place of the Prophet, if he did not industriously turn to it, or if it were not the Portion of Scripture in order to be read that day. Our Saviour knew, no doubt, before he went into the Synagogue what would happen to him there; for he himself had Power to order it as he pleased. So that, this example does not at all suit with the Superstitious Custom of consulting Scripture to learn Events which Men know nothing of before. And Christians have no more ground to expect, that God will Answer them by the *Sortes Biblica* (if I may call them so) than the Heathens had to depend upon the Verses of *Homer* and *Virgil* for Oracles and Guides in all their Difficulties.

Fourthly, To give us a full comprehension of this Vanity, we must know, that several, who used this method, did not content themselves with consulting one single Book, but took several, one after the other. For example, The Prophets, the Evangelists, and the

**Epistles of the Apostles.** If they found nothing to the purpose at their opening the *Prophets*, they tryed the *Gospels* next, and then the *Epistles*, till something offered, which they made a shift to apply to their own Circumstances. Now we may easily conceive, that they would not miss of something which they looked for, after so many Experiments; and especially, when they contented themselves with strained and unnatural Interpretations.

But perhaps you'll say, All these Consultations were attended with Prayer, beseeching God, that he would discover the Truth to them.

Greg. Tur. L. iv. v. *Gregory Bishop of Tours* hath thus described that Ceremony. "The Priests first of all lay three Books upon the Altar, which are the *Prophets*, the *Epistles* of St. *Paul*, and the *Gospels*, and then they pray to God, that he will tell them what shall come to pass. Now I would be glad to know, who ever told these Men, that God will hear such Prayers; or, how indeed can they tell, that such impudent Curiosity would not be highly offensive to him? Hath God any where obliged himself to tell us every thing that we have an itch to know? He hath only engaged to hear those Prayers which are attended with the three conditions, express in these three Latin words, *a bonis, bona, bene*, that is to say, such as are put up to him by good Men; such as ask good Things, Things necessary to Salvation; and such as are regularly and well offered to him, with

with a becoming confidence in his Power and Goodness. It were an easie matter to prove this by several Texts of Scripture, were it necessary to my purpose. Now it is plain, that the knowledge of future Events, which Men desire to obtain by these Openings of the Bible, is not any of those things, which good Men can seek, as of importance to their Eternal Salvation, and consequently, not any of those which God is pleased to manifest to Men upon that consideration.

These Prayers therefore are unprofitable and vain; nay, we may affirm, that they cannot be well-pleasing to God under the Gospel-state. For God expects, that Christians should refer all future Events to *His* disposal, that they should rely entirely upon his Providence, and receive all, even those appointments which are most calamitous and ungrateful to Flesh and Blood, with Meekness and Resignation. There is but one thing in futurity which we ought to be sollicitous for, and that is, what shall become of us in the next Life. And this is a *Future* which depends upon the *Present*, I mean upon our Obedience to the Commands of the Gospel, which are so clear, and so well known, that we want no fresh Revelations to instruct us in the matter. Whatever Confusions may happen in the Country where we Live, whatever Misfortunes we may undergo in our private Capacities, all these have no necessary connexion with the Happiness or Misery which awaits us hereafter.

ter. And this is all we need not to be informed in beforehand concerning them.

I observe, in the *Fifth* place, That this Opinion of God's discovering the Truth by casual Experiments, or his presiding over these, *in a particular and more immediate manner*, is of very dangerous Consequence, if we persue it through all those Inferences, which naturally and necessarily result from it. For, if This be once taken for granted, it will follow, That all such determinations are to be esteemed as so many Express Answers from Heaven; and consequently, that we ought to take our Measures by them, as a Rule that can never deceive or mislead us. And yet, since this is false, really, and at the bottom, what will be the Effect of such a Perswasion? Many things will be taken in hand, upon the Credit of these Decisions, which in process of time would turn to very ill account: Many things neglected, which are necessary to be done, upon our being dissuaded and discouraged by these Sortes: And a thousand other Inconveniences must ensue, too obvious to need a particular Enumeration; since every Man may with great ease represent them to his own thoughts.

I think then, after all this, it can be no breach of Modesty to conclude that there is nothing, either more false, or more fantastical than that Opinion, which pretends the Decisions of *Lots*, or casual Experiments, to be

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the Decisions of Heaven, in that sense which I have explained them in, throughout my whole Discourse upon this Argument.

## C H A P. X.

*That those Magistrates are not to blame, who have set up Lotteries for the Benefit of the Poor. A Commendation of the Hollanders in general, and particularly, with regard to the Lotteries opened by Publick Order.*

There is one Inconvenience, consequent upon that Opinion which I have been hitherto disproving, purposely omitted by me. Which is, that this is to Arraign our Government for an irreverent use of the most Sacred things in the World; and for setting an ill Example to the Persons living under them, by teaching such to make use of *Lots* upon every trifling occasion. For in truth, according to our Adversaries Principles, every Ticket is a Miracle, and yet all the World knows, that these are drawn without any sort of Devotion. Now indeed this kind of Arguments, taken from the Practice of our Superiours, proves nothing at all, and is of greater force to overthrow the Truth, than to support and defend it. The Magistrates of these Countries do not take

take upon them to be Infallible ; and their Authority extends not to the determining what is True or False, but what is Good or Hurtful to the Publick. Besides, since it is certain, that there are infinitely more Magistrates in an Error, than there are that defend the Truth ; that Infallibility, which any Man should go about to annex to their Character, would only tend to give Falshood more Credit and Countenance. Besides, it is a Refuge fit for none, but such as distrust the merits of their Cause, to call in the secular Arm to their Assistance, and shelter themselves under the Authority of their Governors.

But I may upon this occasion observe to my Readers, that in defending the Truth, I have insensibly (for indeed that was no part of my design) vindicated at the same time our Governors, who have allowed so many Lotteries of late. I understand there are some who find fault with them upon this account, and highly condemn all that take out Tickets ; and all this upon that poor pretence, which the foregoing Chapters have undertaken to Confute. These Persons may soon be disabused, if they please to consider what hath been said ; and if not, they will have the worst of it. Our comfort is, they cannot Dragoon us into their own unreasonable Opinion, so that their displeasure may create some uneasiness to themselves, but is not like to bring any mischief upon us.

For

For my part, I declare, I admire the Judgment of those who contrived *Lotteries* for the Relief of the Poor; and think no commendation great enough for the Governours who have made use of them to that purpose. This is one Effect of that great Prudence, so visible in every part of their Administration. It may not be amiss to insist a little upon this Point; because what I shall say to it may be a yet farther Confirmation of that which hath gone before, with relation to *Lotteries*, and the use of them.

They that sit at the Helm, or that are concerned in making Laws, ought principally to be thoroughly acquainted with two things, in order to a successful Discharge of their important Station. *First*, They should know perfectly well, how to distinguish between what is *Just* and what is *Unjust*; and *Secondly*, They should be well skilled in the Temper of the People under their Government. Without the *First* of these, it is not possible that Justice should be duly Administred; and without the *Second*, they will never be able to apply the general Rules of Justice seasonably and usefully to the particular Exigences of their Subjects. To treat at present of the *Second* only. A Lawgiver, or Magistrate, who Enacts or Governs without understanding his Nation throughly, falls under one unavoidable Inconveniencie, which soon discovers how ill he fills his Post: Which is, That supposing his People of a contrary disposition to what they

they really are of, he makes Laws to them impracticable; after which, either there must be an infinite number of Examples made for the breach of those Laws, whereby his Government becomes odious, and the State is not one whit the better; or else he sees his Authority contemned; by which the Government is in imminent danger of being utterly Ruined. Whereas, when Laws are suited to a Peoples Temper and Capacity, and proceed upon a true knowledge, what manner of Men a Governour hath to deal with, He hath the pleasure of seeing his Laws diligently obser'd; he is seldom put upon publick punishments; and the publick enjoys quietly and comfortably all the advantages resulting from the due observation of the Laws.

This Defect I am mentioning was observable in the Common-wealth of *Rome*; the security whereof depended upon a supposition, that the Principal Ministers of State would be free from Ambition, Luxury, and Avarice. Now this it was most ridiculous and absurd to suppose, and the doing so, ruined that Republick in a very short time, when it was at its highest point of Elevation. The Consuls and Prætors, who usually governed large Provinces, and had a considerable Force under their Command, were absolute in their Districts and Armies, during the time of their Magistracy: There was no Appeal from their Judgments, at least none in favour of the Inhabitants of their Provinces; nor any superior Power to check

check or change their Proceedings. When they had ravaged and ruined all within their Jurisdiction, outraged their Wives and Daughters, and murdered those that had the courage to complain of their Oppression or Avarice ; all the Remedy left, was only to wait for the expiration of their Office, and then to impeach them at *Rome*, with infinite expence and hazard, without any assurance of having justice done, or satisfaction made. The utmost they could obtain, was the getting them banished, and the Estates, of which they then stood possessed, confiscated. This punishment was uncertain, and, if compared with the exorbitance of their Crimes, but very small. It restrained only, such as had in their own temper a Principle of Virtue ; the rest contemned it ; and all, who had not been horribly to blame, were sure to escape it. This we may gather from *Tully's* Orations against *Verræs*, one of the vilest Wretches that ever that State entrusted. And yet it was as much as all *Tully's* Eloquence and Address could do, to humble him.

The Laws had provided no remedy against these disorders, because they presumed the Magistrates to be Men of Probity ; which yet in fact never happened, after *Rome* grew great. From thenceforth, the easiness of doing injuries with impunity, and the vast gain of a publick Post, let loose the Reins to Covetousness, and tempted Men to make an ill use of this Defect in their Laws. Then they were reduced

ced to a necessity, either of punishing most of the Intendants upon their return to *Rome*, which was not possible to be done ; or of conniving at, and suffering under these Disorders, which the State did ; for they were only the Unfortunate, and the insupportably wicked, that could be brought to an account.

A Powerful Monarchy, but of another nature, hath for several Ages proceeded upon a false Supposition, which hath done great prejudice, and brought it several times upon the very brink of Ruin. It supposes its principal Ministers to *make themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake* ; but the effects have proved them to have the same inclinations with common Men. This made it necessary, either to punish an exceeding great number, or else to resolve tamely to look on, and see their Law of Continence broken ; either of which methods is of ill consequence ; and indeed by this means that Government is become despicable ; and several mighty Nations have, upon this provocation partly, shaken off its Yoke.

Now if we compare the Laws of *Moses* with the Genius of that Nation to whom they were enjoyned, we shall find, that God did plainly descend, as it were, and accommodate himself to their present Condition and Temper ; that he tolerated many things, which would not have been endured in a more spiritual People, and are accordingly forbidden to Christians at this day. Our Lord, for instance,

hath

hath taught us, that *Divorce* was allowed them only, because of the hardness of their hearts ; and it is prohibited under the Gospel, except in one case only.

M.t. 19. 8.

*Solon* is likewise commended, for studying the humour of the *Athenians*, before he undertook to make their Laws, and for erecting his Scheme upon this model, so far as the publick Good would permit. This is the account *Plutarch* gives of him in his *Life*. " He never attempted to remedy that which might be well enough born, nor to make unnecessary Innovations ; wisely foreseeing that, if a general alteration should disorder the State, it might not be in his power to compose all again, and to form them upon the best Pattern. But he established such Rules, as he hoped they might be brought to, by persuasion or by such a compulsion as would not endanger the publick Peace ; by a due mixture, (as himself called it) of Power with Justice. Hence, when he was asked afterwards, whether his Laws at *Athens* were the best that could be made, he answered, " They were the best that could be made for them, who were not at that time in a condition of complying with any better.

If it be taken for granted, that the Members of a Commonwealth are entirely moderate and liberal ; and upon this supposition, you expect, that they will retrench their superfluous Expeances, and give what they can spare freely to public

public uses, and the maintenance of the Poor, that so lasting Provisions may be made for those who cannot support themselves; Experience will soon convince the World, how vain such a supposition is; how grossly they are deceived who take their measures by it, and how destructive the consequences of such a mistake will prove. We should suppose Men to be what they commonly are; that the generality of them are more disposed to Vanity and Avarice, than to Charity and Moderation. In a certain Monarchy already mentioned, it hath been presumed, that its principal Members would be generally Bountiful and Modest, and in pursuance of this Notion, they were made the Depositaries and Trustees of large and many Charities, given for the Relief of Persons in Want. But these Men are commonly as proud and greedy as their Neighbours, they have converted those Charities to their own use, and left the Poor to be sustained by the Care of the Laity.

They who formed the Polity of these Provinces have been careful not to split upon any such Rock. They depended upon no greater Virtues in the People, than might reasonably be expected in the present corrupt State of Mankind. They saw that if the Necessities of the Poor were left only to Generosity, there would be but very few Hospitals, and their Wants must be too slenderly provided for. They therefore have engaged the People to furnish a Stock for this purpose, not merely by pre-

pressing the Doctrins of the Gospel, which have but too weak an Influence upon the Multitude; but by moving and falling in with some certain Passions which they might be sure to find Predominant in some Men's Minds. One of these is Vanity, or a design to distinguish and set themselves above the Meaner sort of People. And this is commonly done by a certain Expensive way of living, which Men of Ability seldom fail to indulge. And upon these Expences they have contrived to raise vast Summs of Mony, without giving any Cause of Complaint, or making any one Man uneasy, with a Fear of being reckoned among the Vulgar. When any one Marries, for Instance, there is a certain Tax laid upon his Equipage, greater or lesser, in proportion to the number of his Retinue. And since Men, upon such Occasions, affect to put the best side outwards, and to make a Figure more Pompous than their Inferiours, The Poor have an advantage from this Gaiety of Humour, which they would have received from very few, if Charity and their own free Disposal had determined them in giving. So it is with those that are buried in Churches, though there be Church-yards for all who will make use of them, yet it is not thought Creditable for People of Condition to be laid there; and they who will be Buried in the Church, are obliged to pay a considerable Summ to the Poor. This Duty again is raised in proportion to the time of the Funeral, the later

later the Hour, the higher the Payment ; and People are commonly so fond of this fantastical Honour, that they grudge no charge, when they are able to support it. Thus the Vanity of those who bury their Relations hath brought in more to the Poor, than a Discretionary Charity would ever have prevailed with them to disburst. Some other Customs of this kind there are in this Country, which evidently demonstrate the Prudence of those who contrived and brought them into Practice.

Hence it is observable, that in some great Kingdoms the settled Funds for the Poor do not amount to so much as those of one single Town in *Holland*; and where the few Hospitals, or other Houses of that nature are scarce so well endowed, as those in *Amsterdam* are. The Capital City of a great Kingdom hath lately been reduced to shut up her Grand Hospital after an infamous manner, because no longer able to pay her Debts, or maintain the Poor, which never was, and in all likelihood never will be the Case of *Amsterdam*, while the City and these Laws stand. All which is owing to Magistrates, whose Elevation above the common People is not shewed by the Pomp or Pride, or Insolence usual in other Places ; but by the Knowledg of their People, by their Skill in the Art of Governing, and by their constant Diligence to procure for this City every thing that can turn to the Inhabitants Advantage. Men that deserve to be made immortal

mortal in Story, and recommended as Patterns to all the World. For by this means infinite indigent Wretches would be sustained, and the Scandal and Inconveniencies of Beggars would be much abated.

The same Penetration which contrived a Method for making Men's natural Disposition to Vanity, Serviceable to the Publick, hath also Projected *Lotteries* for the Benefit of the Poor. The Expensive War so long kept up by the boundless Ambition of our Neighbours, and the vast Losses in Trade, had raised all Commodities to a most exorbitant Price. Charity cooled very sensibly, and the usual Alms which formerly added to the fixed Endowments, sufficed for the Maintenance of the Poor, fell very far short in this time of common Hardship. - But what cure was to be applied to that Evil? Must the Poor be left to starve for want of Sustenance? That were both a Reproach to People, Professing Christianity, and a Prejudice to the State. But how then should Money be found for this Purpose? Should a new Tax be laid upon the People already over-burdened with the unavoidable Expence of a long and bloody War? This would occasion great Complaints, and by relieving the Needs of some, reduce a great many more to Poverty.

Neither of these ways was practicable in such a Juncture, and therefore another Passion was to be managed, which is but too common, and more especially in such Places as *Holland*, where

where most Men live by their Industry. This is a Desire of growing Rich in its own Nature, directly opposite to Liberality. Some course must be found of making People Bountiful upon a Principle of Covetousness, and of engaging them to give much to the Poor, in hopes of receiving much more themselves. This is a Project that can never fail; but the only Difficulty is how to form it? And yet even this is feasible. *The Passions*, (says an eminent Author) do often give Birth to others of a Nature most contrary and distant from their own. Thus Avarice sometimes brings forth Prodigality, and Prodigality Avarice; and another Ingenious Observation the same Person hath, that Covetousness is sometimes the cause of quite contrary Effects. And a world of People Sacrifice all their present Possessions to doubtful and distant Hopes.

These Maxims never received so full and frequent Confirmations as they have done of late by the Lotteries set on Foot in this Country. A world of People who Contribute very sparingly to the Poor, though Men of considerable Fortunes, which qualified them to do abundantly more, have ventured large Sums in hopes of a good Lot. And all who live by their Labour, and know not how to maintain their Families, strained hard to take out Tickets, especially in those Lotteries where they were to be had at easie Rates. This is so well known, that the Inhabitants of these Provinces need not to be told it; but I speak at present for the Information of Strangers.

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Some perhaps may take it ill, that these Maxims of Mr. *Roncheforcant* are applied to them, upon a Pretence that they put into these Lotteries upon a Principle of Liberality to the Poor, for whose Benefit they were contrived: If this be so, I am heartily glad of it, and wish there were more such generous Spirits among us, and that God would both increase and reward them. But generally speaking, a prospect of Gain was undoubtedly the Motive to most People, who thus disposed of their Money. Were it needful to prove this, it might soon be done effectually, by appealing to those who have the Distribution of the publick Charities. Let them only ask these Persons to lend the same Sum they have put into the *Lotteries*, Interest-free for ten Years to the use of the Poor; and the Answers made to such a Request will teach us what Judgment to pass upon their Liberality. But of this I shall have occasion to say more hereafter.

In the mean while, be the Principle of advancing Money what it will, still the Poor are as effectually Relieved every whit one way as another, and so the Contrivers of these *Lotteries* have attained their end. They that bring in their Money do it voluntarily, without any Complaint or Mumuring against the Government; which is a thing, to which in all raising of Money, very great regard ought to be had. And therefore no Commendation

can be too great for those who have found out this Method for Relieving the Poor.

The generality of People do so little understand what it is that truly deserves Praise, or rather their Tast and Judgment are so vitiated by Custom, that they are most profuse in the Commendations of those things which deserve most to be discountenanced and abhorred. And on the other hand, they despise and run down those things which merit our highest esteem. For Instance; they speak in Terms of Admiration of a *subtle Politician*, or a *mighty Conqueror*; Men, who for the most part are the Scourges and Plagues of Mankind, and such as God in the Wisdom and Justice of his angry Providence makes use of to Chastise, or to cut off a sinful People for their Wickedness. But such as find out needful Expedients for the Good of civil Society, have their Names either Buried in Silence, or mentioned in Terms that express very little Esteem: And all this, though Men see, and feel, and live by the Profitable Fruits of their Providence and Pains. I will not at present stand to inquire into the Reasons of their unaccountable Proceeding. This would draw me too far from my Business. But for my own part, I had much rather be ~~the Author of a Method for Relieving the Poor~~, or any way making Mankind easie and happy, all, without hurting one single Soul; than the Inventer of new Engines, or Secrets for winning a Battle, or taking a Town. Which at last comes to this, that such a one hath been al-  
sisting

sisting to an Achievement, never to be done but by shedding a great deal of Blood, and making a great many Families very Miserable.

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## C H A P. XI.

*The Lawfulness of putting into Lotteries, provided it be not done upon a Principle of Covetousness. Directions how to judge of this.*

**I**T may possibly be objected, that as I have stated the Case, *Lotteries* ought to be prohibited. I represent the Matter so, that few put into them out of Charity, and it is plain, Men ought not to do any thing out of Covetousness. So that if the Takers of *Tickets* act upon this Principle, they should not take out any at all. And perhaps too I may be charged with contradicting my self, in commending the Persons who have set up *Lotteries*, because in so doing they minister to Men an Occasion of doing what they ought not to do.

I begin with the latter part of the Objection, and answer; That the Establishers of these *lotteries* are in no degree to blame, because they do not thereby compel any Man to put in all, and much less to put in upon a vicious Principle. Quite contrary, they invite Men to view their Liberality, and for those who do not comply with this Invitation, the Fault is all their own. It is confess'd, this Method of

Succouring the Poor proceeds upon a Supposition, that many, nay most will contribute to it in prospect of Advantage to themselves. But to make an ill Disposition, to which our Governors are not accessory, turn to good Account, never yet was thought worthy of Blame. This is bringing Light out of Darkness, justly esteemed an Instance of the Highest, and an Imitation of the divine Wisdom. Could we root all Covetousness out of Men's Hearts, which Ruins so many Families and Commonwealths, this should be done without any Demur. But since it is not in the Power of Men to cure all that are Infected with this Vice; and since they who have to deal with Mankind, make sure reckoning of a great many Persons thus tainted; all that can be done in this case, is to try if they can prevail with such to contribute indirectly to some publick Good. Though it were exceedingly to be wished, yet it cannot probably be hoped or expected that the World should be cleare of this shameful Passion; and consequently we must take our Measures as becomes Men who take it for granted that it shall always continue.

Hence you plainly see, that I think it possible for Men to put in to *Lotteries* very innocently because I declare this possible to be done upon a Principle of Charity. But this is what will require a little more enlargement. There are two sorts of Persons who may take Tickets out of *Lotteries*, Some of these may have great ob-

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easion for a good Lot, as not, (or very hardly) being able in their present Circumstances to support themselves and their Families in those necessary Expences, which Decency and their Condition require. By this, I mean such Charges as cannot be avoided without exposing a Man's self to Contempt among People of the same Quality ; for the Poet's <sup>Faven. Sat.</sup> Observation in this case is most III.

*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,  
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.  
Want is the Scorn of every wealthy Fool,  
And Wit in Rags is turn'd to Ridicule.*

A Man under this Hardship does not only endure a great deal of Uneasiness, but becomes useless to others too ; by means of that Contempt which always attends such a strait Fortune. No doubt, a Man may Lawfully desire to be delivered out of this melancholy Condition, if already under it ; or to prevent his coming into it to the best of his Power, without offending against any Rules given us in the Gospel. So that they who are in danger of such a Calamity may use all prudent Methods, and lay hold upon every fair Occasion which offers, for sheltring themselves from Misery. Now these Men again may be subdivided into two sorts. Some are single Persons, and have none but themselves to take care for. Others have large Families and Dependences that challenge a Support from them. Now, who

can find fault with these Men, but especially the latter sort, if they be desirous to live, and to leave their Families, though not in a Condition of Plenty and Luxury, yet in such a competent Provision as shall set them above Contempt, and the being beholding to others for a Subsistence? If then an occasion of doing this happen, where the venturing a little may bring in a great Gain, and wrong no body, no doubt they may very lawfully embrace this Opportunity. And such a one is a mutual Agreement between a number of Adventurers, (especially when countenanced by publisk Authority, that there may be no indirect dealing in the Matter) that each shall put in a certain small Sum, and all this shall be reduced to a few greater Sums, to be enjoyed by those that Lots shall give it to. And this is properly what we call a *Lottery*.

But then there are two Cautions necessary to be observed upon these Occasions. The first is, that no Man venture a larger Sum than the Circumstances of his Family can bear. The Reason of this is, *First*, That this disables him from doing other Charities, such as he hath been used to, and ought not to discontinue upon any Pretence, but an impossibility of keeping them up any longer. *Secondly*, Because when the Sums are greater than Men can well afford, their Concern for the Loss will grow too sensible. Now, besides that no Man ought to expose himself to immoderate Concerns, there are several ill Consequences which

which may attend it, that ought to restrain Men from coming under the Temptation.

Provided we keep clear of these Inconveniences, I see no Reason that should debar the Persons I have been describing, from putting in to Lotteries. They may wish for a great Benefit, if a Disappointment give them little or no Uneasiness, and do not hinder them in the Discharge of their Duty. I allow these *Tickets* are not taken out upon a Principle of Charity; but neither can they be charged with Covetousness, in regard a Benefit would come seasonably to their Circumstances, and they only seek a lawful Profit by lawful Means.

But there are others, by whom Lotteries are chiefly filled, who might put in purely out of a charitable Design, and yet do not. The Rich I mean, who have not only enough to live handsomly upon, but to support a much greater Expense, and who do actually spend a great deal, without any fear of being reduced to Want. These cannot pretend any need to increase their Estates; for they are qualified for unnecessary Expences already; and live at a Rate, which many of the same Quality can very well deny themselves, without any danger of rendring themselves Despicable in the Eye of the World.

And yet these Men are not content with what they have, but perpetually grasping at more; and as soon as any *Lottery* opens, they run into it with all the eagerness imaginable. They take out vast numbers of Tickets to get

the best Benefits; as if they designed to take the Meat out of their Mouths, who cannot afford to venture so much as themselves. And yet they take it ill, to have it thought, that Covetousness is the Motive they act upon. They tell you coolly, that they are content to hazard their Money for the sake of the Poor; but otherwise they should not have been concerned in these *Lotteries*. I need not instance in the severl Artifices used by them to cover their Avarice: The Examples of Men that act and talk at this rate, are to be met with in *Holland* every day. But we must pluck off this Disguise, and lay down some infallible Marks, whereby the true motives may be distinguished, and evidently discerned, which prevail with them to engage in these matters.

Men that proceed upon a Principle of Charity, do not content themselves with shewing it in one single Instance, and least of all in such a one, as exercises Charity upon a prospect of a very considerable advantage. They that are truly Charitable take all occasions of being so. They give freely, when they cannot hope to receive, what they give, back again; and not, when they may reasonably be suspected of proposing a great gain to themselves by giving. They that do otherwise, are like those pretended Zealots for the Publick Good; who are even boasting how much they love their Country, when such discourse may get them a good Place; but are as mute as Fishes.

Fishes, when the defence of their Country is like to prove hazardous, or to hinder their Preferment. The Zeal of these *Worthy Patriots* is a Zeal of Interest, and aims at their own private Advantages, and inspired by hopes of Gain. This is a sort of Traffick, where they venture boldly; they may indeed lose all, but then they may get a great deal too.

It may be said, that I wrong these Gentlemen, in supposing them to give no other proof of their Charity; besides the taking out a great many Tickets; and, that they evidence this disposition of Mind in many other Instances. Now I do not undertake to say, that they do no acts of Charity, but I say, that what they give upon other occasions bears no proportion to the Sum they venture in these Lotteries. They put more in to these at one time, than they give away to the Poor in ten years; and this shews hope of Gain, and not Charity, to be the secret Spring by which they are moved.

If, as some pretend, they wished for a good Lot only that they might be more Liberal to the Poor, they would give a sensible demonstration of that Liberality these two ways. First, They would be Liberal to their power, upon other occasions as well as this; and by what they do at present, shew us what we might expect from them hereafter, when in better Circumstances. But when we see Men of Wealth and Vanity, not give the tenth part of that to the Poor, which they squander

G 5 away,

away in unnecessary Expences, and never blame themselves for so unequal a distribution; this is but poor encouragement to presume, that if they were yet more Wealthy, their Alms would be greater, and their vain Expenses not greater in proportion too. Can any Man in his Senses believe, that they who grow giddy upon a Sum of Money, and forget what they are, as matters go now with them, should be more Moderate, more Liberal, and less Extravagant and Vain, if matters were better with them? For my part, I cannot be of that Opinion, and Experience proves the direct contrary. We may have often observed Men's desires enlarged with their Estates. And their Luxury, and Profuseness, and Pride, rises daily; but it is very seldom, that any, who were not Charitable according to their ability, in meaner Circumstances, have grown so, when advanced to a higher and more plentiful Condition. How void of all Sense would it be, to imagine, that a Man who had never given any marks of his Conduct or Courage, while he was a Lieutenant, a Captain, a Colonel, a *Marshall de Camp*, would signalize himself for Prudence and Gallantry, if he were made a General? All the World would laugh at so absurd a Fancy: To conjecture of the *Future* by the *Past* is a Maxim universally received. And yet some would fain persuade us, that the Men, who have all along betrayed a world of Avarice and Insolence, and Vanity, and Niggardliness to the Poor,

Poor, would presently be changed into the Reverse of all this, could they obtain a *Great Lot.* If they spoke sincerely, or were better acquainted with themselves, they would tell you, that then they would make a greater Figure, keep their Coach (if they have none at present) buy richer Furniture, or some other Follies of this kind, all much more credible, than growing more Charitable to the Poor. They will do well to examine their own Breasts, and Condemn themselves, if they are guilty, in this point. I reflect upon no particular Person; and the Rich, who feel such thoughts rising in themselves, or suggested to them by others, may, if they please, distinguish themselves from those Rich Persons, that are accused of insatiable Avarice, either upon a Principle of sordid Greediness, or to satisfy the Inclinations of an excessive Pride.

But there is another evident and unanswerable Proof of their Greediness of Gain upon this occasion. What do these Charitable Persons, who pretend to consult no other Interest than that of the Poor, do for their sakes, when they get any considerable Lots? Are they contented to draw back their Capital, and leave their clear Profits to Charitable uses? Or do they distribute themselves largely out of them to Persons whom they know in want? Nay, Do they so much as disburse a tenth part of what they get to these uses? I cannot tell what they do, but I have never heard so much of any of them, Now sure, as tho

the Profit is publick, the Liberality should be publick. There is no Ostentation in all this; and such an Example would do more service, than Alms given in secret, which no body sees, and many suspect not to be given at all. But if there were some Ostentation mixed with it, yet is that more excusable, than the Behaviour of those Men, who, out of a pretended Care to avoid the Imputation of Vain-glory, give very little openly, and yet less in private. A Man had need of all his Charity to think them Liberal; and, if he govern himself by the outward appearance, he cannot help thinking the contrary. These are a perverse sort of Hypocrites, that dissemble the wrong way: All their Actions visible to the World favour of Pride and Love of Money; but they are all Moderation and Bounty, when no Eye sees them: Whereas the common Hypocrite puts on the disguise of Modesty and Contempt of the World, while Covetousness and Vanity, which reign within, are reserved for his private and retired hours.

It may perhaps be asked, what use I would have a Rich Man make of a good Lot, when it falls to his share. I will, as well as I can, shew what I think would become him in such a Case. Now in the first place I take for granted, that he hath no need of this Benefit, and would not miss, or suffer for want of it; if it had never happened to him; and, that if he had lost the Money ventured, he would be able to live in all points as easie as before.

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Now, in such a Case, the least a Man can do, who professes to have put in to the *Lottery*, purely out of Charity, is to give a considerable part of his Gains to the Poor; for otherwise it is manifest, that a Spirit of Trade and Greediness was the real Inducement to taking out his Tickets.

But, still the doubt remains, what I allow to be a *considerable* part. Why truly, the least I can possibly think fit to be given, is, a *Tenth*. Less we cannot think belongs to the Poor, out of a Sum which costs us nothing, and which is so clear Gains, that we had been never the worse, if it had not been ours at all. The *Israelites* heretofore were obliged to a much larger proportion, either to the Poor, or other Religious uses, out of the product of their Lands, which cost them a great deal of toil and charge to Cultivate. I will set down here briefly the calculation of it, lest some, not versed in these matters, should suspect I carry the thing above its due pitch. \*

After having paid the First-Fruits \* Selden of  
in Eared Corn; if a Man had Titus, Ch. 11.  
gathered 6000 Measures, the Heave-Offering  
was at least 100. Of the remaining 5900 the  
first Tythe took off 590 out of the remaining  
5310. A second Tythe was to be paid which  
consisted of 581, so that the Owners share did  
not exceed 4779 Measures; so that every Man  
paid yearly (besides the First-Fruits) more than  
a Sixth, and near a Fifth part of his Revenue. I  
make no mention of the *Freewill-Offerings*, nor  
of

of the *Sin-Offerings* appointed by the Law for certain *Trespasses or Legal Uncleanesses*; nor of the Duties paid to the Kings, after the *Israelites* came under a Monarchical Government. Now, if God thought fit, that Labouring Men, who oftentimes Till an ungrateful Soil, who have bad Years, and are at great Charge, as well as Pains, upon this account, might without any Inconvenience pay out a *Fifth* part of their Income, (for we cannot suppose that God designed to fleece and beggar his People to enrich the Priests and Levites,) what may we reasonably think he expects for Pious and Charitable uses, out of a Gain which comes in without any Expence or Trouble at all? If God required such Liberality under the Law, what ought Men to think themselves obliged to under the Gospel? State the Comparison between a Husbandman that Inns *Fifty Bushels* of Wheat and out of them pays *Ten* every year; and a Rich Merchant, who upon an extraordinary occasion ventures four or five hundred Crowns (which is but a small Sum) in a Lottery designed for the Relief of the Poor; and who is not satisfied to reimburse himself, but grudges a *Tenth* part of that profit, which costs him nothing, to the use of the Poor. If that *Israelitish* Husbandman paid all that Tax laid upon him honestly and chearfully, because God had commanded him so to do; we must acknowledge his Liberality deserved great Commendation. And if so, Is not that *Christian* worthy of great Reproach, who pays little

little or nothing to the Poor, out of extraordinary Profit, arising out of a *Lottery*, intended and contrived merely for the Benefit of the Poor? If such management as this be allowable, we must own the *Christian Morality* much short of the *Jewish*; and that if *Jesus Christ* did not come utterly to destroy the Moral Law, yet he came to make great abatements, and hath very much impaired, and relaxed its most Excellent Precepts. I cannot suppose any Christian so scandalously ignorant, to put so dishonourable a construction upon the Gospel: They that have ever read the Fifth Chapter of St. *Matthew* cannot be guilty of so shameful and dangerous a mistake; as to think, that our Saviour gave any License to Us to be more Niggardly and Covetous, than the Law of *Moses* suffered the Jews to be.

Nor the ancient Jews only, but (which is more surprising) the Heathens themselves will rise in Judgment against the Avarice of Christians, in this point of Liberality. Nay, what Heathens are these that will condemn us? Not only the grave and severe Philosophers, whose wise Frugality secured them from Poverty and Anxious Fears of future Accidents; but such *Merchants* and Men of Trade as You, who gave *Hercules* the Tenth of their Profit, while you, who call your selves Christians, do not pay the true God the Twentieth part of yours. I shall not trouble my Reader with Proofs of this, which he may find at leisure, if

(2) Chap. III. if he please to consult that (2) Discourse of *Tythes*, quoted in the Margin, and the Notes upon it.

The Proposition I assign for Benefit in a Lottery, and that which a Man who needs them not should give to the Poor, is certainly the least that can be admitted. This is the Proportion of an *Evil Eye*, as the Hebrews express themselves with regard to their *Heavenly Offerings*; that is, of a Covetous Man, who sees that Money with Discontent and Envy in another Man's Hand, which he might see in his own; though it be no inconvenience to him not to have it. This must not be called *Liberality*, except we will prostitute that Name to every sort of Alms, without any respect to the proportion given, and to that reserved for one's own use. But upon this occasion, They who expect to have their *Liberality* commended and approved justly, in the sense this word usually carries, must do one of these two things following.

The *First Proposal* I would make, shall be, to take back his own Money, which purchased the Tickets, and to leave the whole clear Profit to the Poor. He that does thus is but where he was before; he gives nothing out of his own Pocket, nor diminishes his ordinary Income one whit. He only gives an unexpected Gain, and such as he could not have repined at never receiving. Thus his *Liberality* will consist, only in not taking from himself, or being straitned for the sake of *Charity*; but in de-  
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voting to the Poor a Profit, which they ministered an occasion to, without fingering any of it himself.

This action, when considered in it self, and compared with that Notion of Liberality laid down in the Gospel, though for the unusualness of the thing it may pretend to some praise; yet is it not any such extraordinary Virtue, as Men at first sight may be apt to think it. A Man loses no part of his Inheritance by it; no part of what his own Labour hath brought him in; his Capital is still in the same state as before. All the loss that can be pretended by the nicest Computation, is only the Interest of his Money for a few Months, till the *Lottery* could be drawn and payment made. And is this a thing to value a Man's self upon? Can we be thought to press a Rich Man too hard, when we urge him to thus much? Must this be reckoned among the Counsels of the Gospel, as some Men speak, which God requires as a mark of Perfection only?

In truth, the Gospel is so far from allowing Men to add to their Estates without measure, that it commands us to be content with Necessaries; and to give freely of our Abundance; that is, so much as we can conveniently spare, without being reduced to such Circumstances, as would disable us from being useful to the Publick. It does not indeed oblige us, upon all occasions, to empty our Purses, and give all that we do not need away to the Poor at once. A Man may keep

a Stock by him, and he may increase it to the best of his power, by fair and honest means; but he ought not to spend more upon himself than serves for the purposes I have mentioned. The rest is the Poors Right, if we would not be accountable to God for our Luxury, or Avarice. And if this be so, what shall we say to them who hold all their Income close to themselves? Can we call these Men Charitable? And yet a Rich Man, who hath a good Lot, and gives it to the Poor, when his own Expences are reimbursed, is exactly this very Man's, as I have plainly shewed you.

But shall we then refuse our Commendation to a rich Man, who complies with this Advice? 'Tis plain, I am far from commending those who have not done so much, and yet think they have deserved great Praise, even for what they do. To this I answer, that I would commend a rich Man, who gives the whole Gain of his Lot to the Poor, and that upon these two Accounts.

*First,* Because we often commend Men, not according to what they should do, strictly considered, for few arrive to that Perfection; but according to what the Generality of Men are used to do. When some Faults are countenanced by Custom; as the desire of heaping up as great Treasures as possibly Men can, without sinful or dishonourable Methods; we commend, not only such as are entirely free from this Vice, but them too, that are less set upon

upon the World than many others. Because they pass for good Men, not when compared with the Rule of their Duty, but when set against the greater part of Men, who are worse. We commend, not only those who are Liberal in the highest degree, but those too who are less greedy and more open-handed than People commonly are. In Places, and among Persons, where Pride and Ambition Govern, without any Offence to the Publick, we praise, not only the Modest and Humble, according to the Standard of the Gospel and sound Reason, but in general all those that are not insolent and extravagantly Vain. Where Debauchery is common, they who are less tainted than others, are esteemed exemplary Livers. In truth, almost all the Commendations we give one another, are not, (if I may be allowed that Distinction) *Absolute*, but *Relative*. Much might be said upon this Occasion, if it were not too Foreign for my main Busines.

So that they who are commended for giving away some small part of their Profit, which they stood in no need of, have no great matter to brag of, nor ought they to entertain any high Opinion of their Virtue upon this account. *Non est bonitas meliorum esse pessimo.* A Man is not therefore good, because some body is worse than he.

The Second Reason, why I would commend such a Man, makes more for his Honor than the former. Which is, because an Action of this Nature, though considered in it self, it be

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no considerable Degree of Liberality, yet it argues a Disposition of Mind, which is indeed worthy of Commendation. When some Faults are so general, that a Man runs no risque at all, either of his Safety or Reputation in giving in to them, it is praise-worthy to oppose them in some Measure, though one be not entirely clear of them. A Man must love Virtue very heartily, to stick to it, when he might discard it quite, without any Scandal. A Man must be thoroughly possessed of those Truths, which engage him to be above the World, when he gives such Proofs of contemning it, as few or no body would have blamed him for not giving. No Man that hath not a very clear Notion of the Excellency of Liberality, could prevail with himself to part with a considerable Advantage, which came flowing in upon him at once, against the Sentiments and Practice of almost all Mankind.

Men commonly think, and in some places especially, that a Man can never be too Rich, either upon the account of Pomp and Greatness, or as a Security against what may happen hereafter, or upon his own and his Families account. And he that when he had attained a Competency; sufficient to skreen him from Poverty and Misery, should sit down quietly, and refuse Opportunities offered to him of growing unmeasurably Wealthy and Great, would be looked upon as little better than a Fool. Now to stand against this Stream by such an Instance of Liberality, as scarce

scarce any body else would be persuaded to, argues more Nobleness and Constancy of Mind, than is commonly to be found. This chiefly would induce me to commend those rich Men, who gave their *Benefit Tickets* to the Poor, especially if they were of a considerable Value.

*Secondly*, But a rich Man may do yet more than this, and yet not any heroick Action neither, though more commendable than the former. Which is to put a considerable Sum into these *Lotteries* for the Poor, and devote the *Principal* and *Profit* both to their use; though his Lot should happen to be of good Value. Then indeed a Man might call it Charity, when one ventures his Mony with a Design that the Poor shall have it *all*. But in regard I suppose the Person still to continue Rich, notwithstanding all he parts with, his Charity is not to compare with theirs, who debar themselves of some Conveniences, and contribute out of their very necessary Supplies, that the Poor may be Relieved.

A great Sum given by a wealthy Man, makes a greater noise in the World, when People do not consider it in proportion to the Abilities of the Giver, but with the very sparing Contributions of others equal in Fortune. And yet when a Man of less Substance straitens himself, though the Sum be small, the Gift is greater than his, whose Plenty never feels the miss of what he gave. So that the Rich have no reason to think it an unreasonable Request.

quest, if we should urge them to let the Poor have the Benefit of their Venture, *Capital* and *Benefit* both. But it is fit they be accosted in yet bolder Terms, and told roundly that they are obliged to this, if they expect to clear themselves of Avarice before God.

God commands Liberality to the Poor, and this Command is grounded upon that great Gospel Precept of *loving our Neighbour as our selves*. This being certain, can we say that he loves his Neighbour as himself, who will not for his sake forego, not only some Convenience, but something, which he suffers no manner of Loss, or real Abatement by? Is this Gospel Charity, to think we cannot live without Superfluities our selves, and to drive our Neighbour to the want of almost all the Necessaries of Life?

Every Man under Hardship, wishes exceedingly to be delivered from it, and thinks a small Inconvenience ought not to hinder so good a Work. So that the Love of our selves persuades us that Charity should not boggle at a small matter for our Benefit. But this Persuasion obliges us to do as much for others, when the Case is theirs, as we think fit to be done by them for us when it is our own. If we do it not, we are Condemned by the Judgment of our own Breasts. Now, if a rich Man's Behaviour, who gives a very little of what he can well spare to the Poor, be measured by the Rule of the Gospel, without any regard to the wicked Practices of a degenerate

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Age ; Can that Man be reputed a great Saint, who puts into a Lottery a Sum, which he will never miss, with a design of making no Profit by it, but letting Sum and Lot and all, (of what value soever) go to the use of the Poor ?

This cannot be thought an overstraining of the Point, because it is no more than the Gospel requires. If Christ had not expected that our Superfluities should go to the Poor, nay, that we should even deny our selves for them ; he would never have said, *Sell what ye have, and give Alms.* It is plain, that selling what we have, and distributing the Purchase to the Poor, is infinitely more than giving a very little of our Income, or Profit to the Poor, without diminishing the Fund, from whence it arises to us. Accordingly we do not find that he vouchsafed to commend those who Contributed to pious Uses out of their Plenty. For on a certain day, he looked and saw the rich men casting their Gifts into the Treasury at the Temple. And what Reflection does he make thereupon ? Does he extol their Liberality ? No such matter. But he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites ; and he said, of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all ; for all these have of their abundance cast in unto the Offerings of God ; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

St. Paul does not praise those that lived in Luxury and Pomp, and while they balked no Pleasure

Luke xxii. 1,  
2, 3, 4.

Pleasure, gave somewhat which they scarce knew how to spend ; but those that are Liberal, even when they are poor. Observe what Character he gives of the Christians Charity in *Macedonia*, to their distressed Brethren in *Judea*.

*2 Cor. viii.*      *the riches of their liberality.*      *For in*

*2. 3, 4.*

*their power (I bear them record) yea and beyond their <sup>o</sup>power, they were willing of themselves ; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministring to the Saints. And yet St. Paul does not require that Men should render themselves Objects of Charity, while they exercise it to others ; but that they should part with as much as they can with any Convenience spare.*

*V. 12, 13,*      *If there be a willing mind it is accepted, according to that*

*14.*

*a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For I do not mean that other men be eased, and you burdened ; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality.*

These Passages are too plain to need Remarks. I shall therefore only observe, that if this excellent Rule of St. Paul were duly put in practice, we should have few or no Poor among us, nor any occasion for such Projects as Lotteries to maintain them. If each would satisfy himself with a moderate Expence in living, and employ the over-plus of his Estate, or the Gains of his Industry for the Relief of them

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that are in Want ; the many empty Bellies would quickly be filled, or at least we should have no Instance of People perishing for Hunger. They that are Incapacitated by Age, or Sickness, to sustain themselves, would find a sure Fund in the Diligence and Frugality, and Charity of their Brethren. Families would repay these good Offices in their Turn, as Occasion required, and then that Mark would be visible indeed, by which Christ directed us to distinguish our selves, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

But alas ! we have nothing like this left in the World ; and therefore since Charity (generally speaking,) is not only grown Cold, but almost quite Extinct, past Hopes of kindling again ; we have been forced to Trick People, as it were into doing Good, and to contrive, that Avarice should do that which Charity, (had there been any left) might and ought to have done. The Collections being quite exhausted and no Care expressed to supply the Alms-box ; because Charity, which came down from Heaven with *Jesus Christ*, is long since returned thither ; there was a Necessity of managing Matters so, that Men should part with that Mony for *their own sakes*, which they would not part with for the sake of their indigent Brethren.

*Lotteries* are a sort of Riddles, which carry a Meaning very different from their sound and outward appearance. We think our Gover-

nors obligé us with an Opportunity of getting a great deal by Hazarding a little. But observe what lies at the bottom, and how they speak to the Men of Wealth. 'Tis as if they should say, the Funds and Collections for the Poor will no longer maintain them, by reason all Provisions are so much dearer, and all People more sparing in their Gifts, than heretofore. Of this we give the Rich notice, and Exhort them to extend their Liberality now more largely, in proportion to Men's Needs, which are more pressing. But these Men turn the deaf Ear to us, they abate nothing of their Pomp and Extravagance, to employ their Savings in Charity. Their Cloaths are Gayer, their Equipages larger, they Game and Drink, as in the Times of greatest Plenty, and they take off from their Charity to support their Vanity. What can be done with these People? We must catch them by their Avarice, and draw them into Lotteries, where in hopes of Gain to themselves, they will give to us. But yet it is to be hoped, that some generous Souls in time may be touched with these publick Admonitions, and do that out of a true Principle, which most do out of a false one. Some rich People sure will put in of their Abundance, and not only take nothing, but leave their own behind them. Providence may possibly out of these Stones raise up Children to Abraham; Such as may imitate the Example, not of his Faith only, but likewise of his Liberality. They will blush to enrich themselves by a Project, made

made purely for the Poor, and to fill their own Bags out of a publick Charity ; and since they want not the Profit that comes in, they will leave it to them that do, and for whose Advantage entirely those Lotteries were appointed.

It concerns those that are in such Circumstances, to reflect very seriously, and enter into their own Consciences, and to discharge that part which both God and Men expect from Persons so well qualified to be Liberal.

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## C H A P. XII.

*A. Digression concerning Liberality, wherein the Nature of this Virtue is described, and the Practice of it recommended.*

After so frequent mention made of *Liberality* in the Chapters that went before, and so many Complaints of its being a Virtue so rarely to be met with, (especially in a State where Men subsist chiefly upon their Industry) I think it may be useful to spend a little time in describing the Nature, and endeavouring to convince my Reader of the Excellency of this Virtue. Many Men, 'tis very possible, who are perswaded that they both understand and practise it, will be surprized to find they had scarce any Idea of the thing, and that if they acted according to it, this hath hitherto been

done without their own Knowledge. But another Motive to me indeed, is the Affinity of this Subject, with that of my whole Book, which turns entirely upon a Method for drawing in great Numbers of People to give to the Poor, so that the givers themselves are scarce sensible what design they are carrying on.

*Liberality* is nothing else, but that Disposition of Mind, which puts us upon giving to those that are in Want, in such Proportions as our present Circumstances will allow. This is the true Notion of *Liberality*, if by that Word we mean a Virtue, or a commendable Quality; but it is often used indeed for a Disposition to give in such a manner, as argues the Man rather Prodigal than Liberal. For there are some Cases in which we should, and others again in which we should not give; (as will appear by and by) Some Persons, whom it is *Liberality* to Assist, and others, whom it is Vanity or Self-interest to oblige, rather than any praise-worthy Design. When therefore a *Liberal* Man is

*Fr. Acad.* defined, one that takes delight in giving. This Definition is rather accommodated to the vulgar use of the Word, which makes no just distinction between Virtue and Vice, than agreeable to their Notion, who make it their business to think and speak nicely and truly in the Matter. In order therefore to explain myself, I shall particularize the several Impressions, which the Philosophical Idea of this Virtue makes upon the Minds of them who

who rightly conceive it. And these are five, which I shall examin in their Order.

I. The First of these, is the *End* Men propose to themselves in giving; which distinguishes *Liberality* from some Vices that carry some Resemblance to it. The End which a truly *liberal* Man hath in view, is the doing Good by Giving, or being Serviceable to the Person to whom he gives. Now this *Good* and *Serviceableness* do not consist in barely pleasing the Receiver, but in helping him to Persevere in Virtue, and to improve in it more than he did before, For a liberal Man being of necessity a Lover of Virtue, he cannot design that to others, which he does not wish to himself: And since he would not desire to be Rich at the Expence of his Virtue, he ought not to give largely upon a Principle which hath no regard to Virtue.

It is not therefore Liberality to furnish a Debauched or Voluptuous Wretch, with means of indulging himself yet more in Sensuality and Extravagance. Princes and great Men are by no means Liberal, when they give profusely to their Favourites and Courtiers, that is, to servile Flatterers, who covet Estates, only that they may make an ill use of them, by living in Pride and Delicacy, and squandering all upon their Lusts. They give great Estates too to infamous Women, not with any intent to Reform them, but to maintain them in, or to draw them over to Vice. This is not Liberality, but scandalous Extravagance, to Support a powerful Party, in Oppo-

sition to sound Reason and Virtue. One evident Proof whereof is this ; that such Persons, who pretend to be Liberal, oftentimes squeeze and injure the Virtuous, to Enrich their Mistresses ; they fleece their honest Subjects to gratifie the Wicked. They give to none but to those who ought to be discountenanced and humbled ; or if Decency engage them to cast some Mark of their Favor upon good Men ; this is done with such a scandalous Frugality, that it is plain, *Liberality* is not the Principle which Governs their Distributions.

They likewise have no Right to this Character of *Liberal*, who are induced to give, not by any Benefit to the Receiver, but by a prospect of getting as much or more again, in return for what they give. This is not Liberality, but Trade and Trucking. Not that it is absolutely unlawful to give in hopes of a Requital, but it is not a Virtue to do so. They that make such Presents are more truly good Husbands than Generous. Thus when Presents are made to Persons in Office or Power, to obtain their Countenance or Protection, or any other Advantage from them, Interest and not Liberality is the Motive to such Actions. The Great, who Favour such, or give them Places, with a design to oblige them to continue this sort of Tribute, have likewise nothing to do with Liberality. The Case is the same with Men that have Dealings together, and get by one another, when they Feast and pay such other Civilities to each other, as are paid

paid to none besides. This is a Consequence of their mutual Interest, and a way of keeping that up, not of exercising their Liberality.

Much less are they to be esteemed Liberal, who are at great Expence, not with any design to do good, but meerly to gratify a vain luxurious Humour. Some such there are, who, take them out of this way, and they are scandalous Niggards. They rack those that deal with them, they higgle unconscionably for all they buy; they stick at nothing, though never so knavish and indirect, only to make a shew, and live great, out of their dishonest Gains. We should entertain a very wrong Notion of Liberality, did we imagine, that they, for instance, who are hard and unmerciful to poor Men that live by their Labour, and Work for them like Slaves, and who do a hundred such barbarous things, are Liberal, because they keep a good House, and a great many Servants; because they wear rich Cloathes, or spend their Money in a great many things of this kind.

There are some Great Lords, who give no other proofs than these of their being Rich, and whom no body gets any thing from, but by selling them what maintains their Luxury and Pride. Nay, the very Tradesmen have reason to be thankful, when they get their Money in any reasonable time; for abundance of your People of Quality stave off paying as long as ever they can, and some never pay at all. Such Men as these never had one single thought of giving, with an intention to do

good. They never designed to employ their Talents in the Subsisting of an honest Family, or the encouraging a worthy useful Person, by giving such, by their Bounty, opportunities of serving the Publick more effectually. And yet these Men have the confidence to pretend to Liberality and Generosity; because they are excessively vain and proud, and throw away their Money in Pomp and Superfluities.

By this time we may perceive, that many who think themselves Liberal, or are reputed so by the injudicious Vulgar, have not the least shadow of a Title to this Virtue. The truly Liberal Man is a greater Rarity than we commonly imagine; and perhaps such a one is scarce any where to be found, except in imaginary Republicks, such as *Plato* and other Philosophers have given us Ideas of, and described their Laws and Customs according to their own exalted Notions of Perfection. The Liberal Man does upon all occasions imitate that Eternal Giver of all good Gifts, who opens his hand and fills all things living with plenteousness, purely for their advantage, and not at all for his own. If we be thankful, 'tis the better for us, because our Gratitude draws down new Blessings. If we be ungrateful, he is not weary of well doing, but suffers us long, and endeavours to Cure our Ingratitude, and to shame us out of it, by fresh Favours. But, whether we be duly sensible of his Kindness, or not; yet His Happiness, which results only

ly from the Excellence of his Nature, and the constant exercise of his Perfections, is not one whit the greater, or the less.

II. But it is not enough, that we consider the Motive to our Gifts and Expences, we must also have regard to the *Persons*, on whom they are bestowed; for there is a sort of People, to whom no proportion of our Gift, though never so great, can make it Liberality to give. Herein Our Liberality differs from His, who enables us to be Liberal. His Treasures are inexhaustible; and, after shedding them down Millions of Years upon the infinite Creatures, which himself Created, with no other design, than to do them good, he will still have infinitely more in store. He pours out several Blessings upon all Men, without any distinction between such as are worthy of his Love, and such as are unworthy. But our Stock is short and soon spent, and the Time of exercising our Bounty will quickly expire; so that we are under a necessity of chusing out some of the same Nature with our selves, to make the Objects of our Bounty and Compassion.

Now the *first* thing to be regarded in the Persons we are disposed to assist, is the need they have of our Assistance. Some want the very Necessaries of Life, and cannot procure them; others make a hard shift, and have much ado to live; and others again, who want nothing of a necessary supply, aim at growing Rich, and taking their Pleasure. Now the *first* sort have the best Title to our Liberality; the *second* put in the next Claim;

and for the *third*, it would be no better than Profuseness, and a very mistaken Generosity, to contribute to the gratifying their desires. If *Liberality* be a desire to do good, those that want it most are so plainly the proper Object of it, that no Body can find any Reason for putting them by.

And yet the Practice of the World is much otherwise. They, who profess to give Instances of their *Liberality*, betray their Ignorance what it means; by singling out such Persons as have no need of it, and so thwarting the true End of this Virtue. *In the doing of Kindnesses* (says an eminent Philosopher) *it is a Man's Duty to help them most, who want his help most.* *But this is not the common way of the World.*

*Cic. de off. L. I. C. 15.* *For most Men choose to oblige those, from whom they look for the best returns,* though the Persons have no need at all of any thing they can do for him. *In collocando beneficio hoc maximè officii est, ut quisq; maximè opis nostræ indigeat, ità ei potissimum opitulari; quod contrà fit à plerisq;.* *A quo enim plurimum sperant, etiam si ille his non eget, tamen ei potissimum inferunt.* “*Let us* (says another) *give that which is necessary in the first place, make that which is profitable our second care, and reserve that which is pleasant to the last.*

\* *Senec de Be-nef. L.I.C.20.* *Primo\* demus necessaria, deinde utilia, deinde jucunda.* Some perhaps may desire to know, wherefore I choose to quote Heathen Philosophers, rather than the Gospel, which is † *Luke xiv. ii.* so very † express to this purpose

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I do it purposely to shew, that my account of Liberality is not the Description of any Supernatural Virtue, but such as humane Reason, abstracted from Revelation, sets before, and recommends to us. It is fit to make the World sensible, that, in offending against the Gospel, they offend against Reason. For some Men are of another Opinion; they forsake Virtue upon a false Imagination, that it is somewhat more than Humane, and not to be practised, without renouncing our own natural Notions. It were to be wished, that some able Pen would manage this Argument, and prove what Men do not seem sufficiently sensible of, that *we must first be Men, in order to be Christians.* We see Men every day possess with an odd fancy, that they are good Christians, though they do not understand what it is to be *Men.* These should be sent to School to the Heathens, and that would fit them for learning Christianity.

The second thing which ought to determine Liberality in the choice of proper Objects, is the Qualifications of the Persons, upon whom it is exercised. It is evident, that most good ought to be done to those who deserve most. Both because this is a Consideration founded on Equity, and because the good Offices done to worthy Men tend to the Advantage of Humane Society in General. It is for the common Interest of Mankind, that virtuous Persons should be encouraged and supported; and not lye under the danger of extreme Misery.

ser to renounce neglected Virtue, and set an ill Example to other People. By this the Liberal Man declares, that Virtue hath the preference in his Esteem, and this preference is of mighty Efficacy towards the procuring it Love and Respect from others.

But Men, quite contrary, very often consider only the Affiduity with which People make their Court; as if this were a sufficient recommendation of it self. Sometimes they scatter their Favours at random, upon the first they meet, or the first that Interest is made for, without any regard to their Deserts.

This gave occasion (as I observed \* Ch. vi. before) to that fantastical Notion of a blind Goddess, who distributes Riches and Honours promiscuously, without any Choice or Discrimination at all.

Now, since every one should not only do good, but do it in such a manner too, that as many as may be may find the good Effects of it, we are bound, no doubt, to give the preference to those Persons, who are most useful to the Publick. Such then as have more than ordinary Understanding, and willing to Communicate their Knowledge to the World; such as decline no pains to acquire, or to diffuse Wisdom, (supposing them to be Persons that stand in need of Publick or Private Encouragement, and that they are Men of virtuous Conversation) have an undoubted Right, before others who have not these good Qualities. By obliging them, we at the same time oblige

oblige those infinite other Persons, who reap advantage by their Labours; which they could never sustain, if cramped by extremity of Want. They that were Liberal to *Erasmus* heretofore, who was born to no Estate, did not only enable that Excellent Person to live comfortably, but gave him the opportunity of laying in that vast Stock of Knowledge, and composing those admirable Books, Posterity reap the Benefit of still. So that it was not *Erasmus* alone, but all who are enlightened by his Learning, that have reason to bless the Liberality, and to celebrate the Praises and Memory of those Generous Spirits, that gave him their Assistance; and the Fruits of their Kindness will descend to all Ages, as long as the Works of this Great Author are in being. If Queen *Christina*, and her famous Chancellour *Oxenstern* had done nothing else, but choosing the Eminent *Grotius* for their Ambassador, by this means qualifying him to live in good Credit, and to be serviceable to the World, rather than out of a design to profit themselves by his Addresses in publick Treaties; this single act had entitled them both to immortal Thanks. And we cannot but extol their Liberality, while we continue to value the most Skilful Interpreter of Scripture, that perhaps ever lived in the Christian World.

Such as these are fit Objects for Princes, and for all those, whose Fortunes put it in their power to be Liberal. [ A Man cannot without

\* J. Howel, without a just indignation \* read  
 Vol. I. §. 4.  
 Let. viii.

the account of that Famous Lord Chancellor of *England*, Sir *Francis Bacon*, whom King *James I.* suffered to languish in Poverty, while he advanced worthless Fellows; good for nothing (if I may so speak) but to disgrace their Benefactor. This Learned Man, a little before his death, wrote a very moving Letter, " Imploring His Majesty's Relief, now in his declining Age, lest he should be reduced to Beg or Starve; and that he who desired to live only that he might Study, might not be forced to Study for a Livelihood. These Expressions have been charged with Littleness of Soul; but I confess that Littleness seems to me chargeable, not so much upon my Lord *Bacon*, as upon his Master, who drove so great a Man to the necessity of making so poor a Request; and who had the Inhumanity to let him dye in Circumstances so deplorable, that he had scarce enough left to Bury him.

That Prince, who was a Master of Latin, and an Author himself, tempted Men to despise Learning, by his neglect of Learned Men.] There being nothing more recommended by all Antiquity, than this kind of Liberality; and yet they who profess to read the Antients most, often practise it least. The World hath seen innumerable Instances of Stewards and Cooks, who have got great Estates in the Service of some Prelates: For some such there have been, who never did good to any but such

Trash,

Trash, or a few Chaplains of their own, who many times know little more, than to Write and Read, and Eat and Drink, and lead a sauntering useless Life upon a good fat Prebend. And this manner of proceeding, it is to be feared, hath, in part at least, given occasion to the Laity, to shew no more regard to them that best deserve it.

There have been many Times and Places, wherein Men of Learning stood but in too much need of *Lotteries* to be set up for their Maintenance; and where some such Project as this seems the only way left to bring Learning into Credit again. We have few or no *Maccenas's* in our days, who, like Him, support the greatest Wits of the Age, and enable them for such Compositions as those of his Favourites; which have immortalized his Memory, and been the wonder of succeeding times, from *Augustus* until now. At present the improvement of Learning, the study of Sacred and Profane Antiquity, skill in Languages, a nice Taste and sound Judgment, zealous love of Truth, a moderate and peaceable Temper, wasting a Man's self with perpetual toil for the Instruction of Mankind; These are Qualities that turn to little account else, than merely the attracting of Envy, or the getting some little cold Recommendation. If a Man shew himself Liberal, 'tis commonly toward some wretched Declaimer, void of Judgment and true Sense; or toward some ignorant Fellow that sets up his Throat, and bawls with all his

his might, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*; that is ready to murder all who do not believe all he says of this Goddess, though they excuse themselves with never so much Temper, and make no Disturbance at all: Or lastly, toward some fulsom Flatterer, whose Exactness and Diligence in making his Court, can only be equalled by his Neglect of those Duties his Character obliges him to. This puts me in mind of *Crates the Philosopher*, who makes up an account for a Licentious Fellow, by setting those whom he should have given most to, but really gave least, against them, to whom he was lavishly kind, and ought to have allowed them little or nothing. *Set down*, says he, *Ten Pound for my Cook, and a Groat for my Physician; To a Flatterer, five Tallents, To one that gave me good Advice, a little Smoak; A Talent to my Whore, and three Half-pence to my Tutor that read Philosophy to me.*

But enough of Learned Men: We will now proceed to some other Objects of Liberality, though we should extend this to as many as is possible, yet Philosophers tell us, we should more especially do it, to such as Blood, or Friendship, or civil Engagements, or Acquaintance, or Religion, and such other Endearments have more closely obliged us to. And that they ought to have the Preference upon these, if they be equal upon other Accounts. It is not necessary to insist upon this Consideration, because when Men give at all, they usually do it to Persons whom they have some

some of these Obligations to. It will rather be convenient to advise Men, that they would not be too nice in observing this kind of Liberality. A \*good Philosopher observes very well, that Liberality must always be attended with Justice; and severely condemns, as they deserve, those who injure one Man to be Bountiful to another. Such is a Prince, who squeezes his People, and regards not what burdensom Taxes he loads them with, to get Mony for his Mistresses. Such a Conqueror that lays whole Countries Desolate, and Ruins Millions of Families, to Enrich his Officers and Souldiers. This is not Liberality, but Rapine and Robbery.

*\* Cic. de  
off. L. I.*

But the Great are not the only Persons offending in this Point; those of inferior Condition, almost every where are guilty of the same Fault. For each Man thinks it is his Duty to hold his Hand, and spare all that possibly he can, both from himself and others, that he may leave his Children Rich. And in this they think it impossible to exceed, since no Estate can be too great for a Family. This is a mighty hinderance to Liberality, and the most plausible Excuse they have for refusing to give. And yet, how far soever Custom may have Corrupted Men, I will put my Reader in mind of two things, which every Father in good Condition is indispensably obliged to, and beyond which he must not go, if he will be Governed by the Rules of Virtue and sober

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Reason. *First*, He ought not to grudge any Expence, necessary for Educating his Children Virtuously, and improving their Understandings. He should get the best Masters, for Forming them to that sort of Life he designs to fix them in. It is much better and kinder, to leave them less in Money, provided they be rich in good Sense, and good Principles ; for without these Qualifications, an Estate does more hurt than good. There is no Father, who would choose to leave behind him a Spend-thrift, or a Miser, rather than a Man of Prudence and Conduct, who by giving and sparing in their proper Seasons, engages the Esteem and Friendship of all that know him. *Secondly*, To regard somewhat of one's own, is absolutely necessary to supply the most moderate Expence of a Man's Condition, and to keep him above the Temptation of doing dishonest and little Things ; it must be allowed very reasonable, for a Father to be desirous to leave his Children in such Circumstances, as may be a Guard sufficient against this Temptation. But then this Reason will not hold to the heaping up for them beyond all measure. A certain Proportion, with Industry and Frugality, we know may serve to set the Owner above the Perplexities of Want : And if our own Reason did not teach us this, yet we might learn it from the many Instances of several in the same Condition, who set out with as little, and yet live very comfortably. And these are so

so many, that we can never be at a loss for them.

A Father, who discharges his part in these two points, to the best of his power, and leaves his Family enough to subsist creditably upon; Either by making out their short Fortune with their Labour, or by being good Husbands according to their Quality; He ought to set his heart at rest, and give the rest to Works of Charity and Publick use. But the mischief is, We affect to leave our Children in great Plenty, that they may live High, and have nothing to do, but to over-look their Estates; and upon this Principle a Man never thinks himself Rich, and consequently never in Circumstances to be Liberal. This is plainly a Passion contrary both to Reason and Religion. No man ought to wish to have wherewithall to live himself an idle useless Creature; and consequently no man should aim at leaving his Children so. Poverty indeed hath its dangers, but nothing is so bad, that Riches and Laziness will not betray a Man to. It is not only the doing no good to others, by turning a Man's hand to nothing at all, but the doing them great harm, by an ill Example; Not to mention other mischiefs of Idleness, which is justly termed the Mother of all Evils.

A Man's desires, therefore, which should be moderate for himself, must not exceed all bounds for his Children. Nay, I will venture to say, that a Father, who hath just ground to suspect his Children will make

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an ill use of what he leaves them, if it be too much, is bound to provide against that Inconvenience in his own Life time; and to bestow part of it in good uses, and to those that are in want. There is no Command of God, a Rule of Prudence, or Affection, or Charity, that enjoyns us to leave to Children of prodigal or stingy Dispositions, that which will confirm them in their Vices, while at the same time we deny to Persons in need, that which would enable them to live in Comfort, and become useful to the World.

There is likewise another Error very common, and that is confining our Liberality to Persons of our own Religion, and choosing to be kind to one of our own Party, who hath nothing to recommend him, rather than to the brightest Virtue, and most valuable Qualifications of any Denomination of Christians, differing from our own. This shews Men acted, not so much by a Spirit of Liberality, as of Partiality, and Interest, and Faction. They love not the good Qualities that ought to engage us, but they are fond of a Passion like their own, and this they think can never be rewarded above its Desert. *Christina's* Bounty to many differing from her, at least while they sat upon the Throne of *Sweden*, and especially to *Grotius*, who was no profest Lutheran, can never be too much Extolled. Many Protestants have sometimes tasted the Liberality of a Roman Catholick Prince and his Ministers. But these Examples are not frequent among

among the Laity, and yet less so with the Clergy. If one of them be kind to a Man of Learning and Piety of another Perswasion, he deserves immortal Praise. This argues in such a one a nobleness of Soul, above the little Interest of his Party ; and that he loves what is truly amiable, wheresover he finds it. And in regard all Societies of Christians ought to agree in, and indeed are purposely designed for promoting that which is good and useful to Mankind ; every Man of any Society ought to encourage a Person, whom he finds capable of contributing more to this End, than common Men, to what Party soever he belongs. It cannot be pretended, that a Man's good Qualities, whom we think of an erroneous Persuasion, are blotted by his belonging to such a Church or Society ; for very often those good Qualities have little or no dependence upon his Errors. Very often his Excelencies qualifie him to do more good, than his pretended Errors can possibly do harm. We must be content to deal upon this, as we do upon other Occasions ; not to require in the Objects of our Liberality, such Perfections as are scarce any where to be found among Men.

“ Since we do not live in a World absolutely  
 “ Perfect and Wise in all Points, but among  
 “ Men who are valuable, if they have the Ap-  
 “ pearances of Virtue ; it will ill become us to  
 “ neglect any body, who gives us any Evi-  
 “ dence of his being a good Man. *Quoniam*  
*vivitur non cum perfectis hominibus, pleneque*  
*sapi-*

Cic. de off.  
L. I. 15.

*sapientibus, sed cum iis, in quibus  
praclare agitur, si sunt simulachra  
virtutis; etiam hoc intelligendum  
potest, neminem omnino esse negligendum, in qui  
aliqua, significatio virtutis apparet.*

*Thirdly,* The *Third* thing to be considered in the Exercise of Liberality, is the Value of the Gift, which must be rated according to the Substance of the Giver, and the Condition of the Receiver. A Man must not give beyond his Power, so as to incapacitate himself for the Relief of another Object, and yet much less so, as to become an Object of other Peoples Charity himself. 'Tis Absur'd and Ridiculous Generosity to give away ones All, and to go to Begging. And 'tis Hypocrisie and Knavery, to give lavishly, and then to heal our Profuseness, with Robbery and Injustice.

The same Philosopher, † after having directed us to moderate our  
 L. I. c. 15. Liberality, adds very Judiciously;  
 Many waste their Estates by giving indiscreetly  
 " Now what can be more senseless, than to  
 " disable ones self from continuing to do that  
 " which he takes delight to do? And besides,  
 Men are often apt to make themselves amends by  
 Rapine for their past Prodigality : But besides,  
 they that are over-liberal, draw Sufferings not  
 upon themselves only, but upon their Neigh-  
 bours too, whom not only Liberality, but  
 Justice obliges them to take care of.

Avoid

Avoid but this Extreme, and we cannot exceed; because we ought to give as much as we can, without too great pinching of our selves. And therefore the Quantity and Measure of our Gift ought to differ very much, according to our Circumstances, and what we can spare; though the Disposition to give, which is the true Source of Liberality, should be equal in all Circumstances. The Rich should give more in proportion to their Estates and Expences. Those that have less, and none, or but a few Children, should give more than they do, who have a numerous Family to provide for. Every Man should consult his own Conscience, and examin sincerely, how much he and his can spare, and all that should go to Liberality. This both Charity and Humanity strictly require of us. For the Poor can never be supported, as they ought, if they who can afford a great deal, give but little, because Men of straiter Fortunes can never raise a Fund sufficient for this Purpose.

And yet there are two things very frequent, which are directly opposite to this Rule. For rich Men neither give in proportion to their Estates, nor to their other superfluous Expences. We find by the publick Collections, that Men of moderate Fortunes are incomparably more Generous and Charitable, than those of overgrown Estates. These last commonly Contribute no more than others who have not above half a quarter so much to do it with. And if upon extraordinary Occasions, they stretch

a little further, though this be but seldom done neither, yet even then they give not near so much as they might very well spare. Many that make nothing of losing great Sums at Gaming, or in Trade, and Feast their Friends, without grudging any Charge, are never Thrifty, but when called upon to Relieve the Poor in their Distress. Let any Man reflect, whether he does not know such Persons as these, and I dare engage he will quickly Recollect a great many Instances of them, within his own Acquaintance.

But which is still worse, this sort of Men do not (like some others that do amiss) condemn their own Proceedings, but justifie themselves, and charge those that think and act otherwise, with Singularity, and Weakness, and Superstition. There are abundance, who govern their actions by no other Rule, than the Customs of the World, and the Practice of most Rich Men; who spend as much in Vanity, and as little in Charity, as possibly they can. When they are urged to pare off some superfluous Expenses, and convert that Money to good uses, the Answer presently is, *Who is there that does so?* And because such Examples are too hard to be produced, they tell you, they must live like their Neighbours; and if they do as much as others, it is unreasonable to find fault with them. This looks as if God durst not shut them out of Heaven, for fear of turning back too great a number. They think it is with the King of Heaven, as it is with Kings

Kings upon Earth, who cannot spare their Subjects, and, for fear of damaging them-selves by punishing too many, are content to make but a few, of those that are guilty, Examples. Whereas they should consider, that He who made all things, can, without any diminution to his own Happiness, command all his Creatures back into nothing; and in an instant produce infinite New Beings, quite different from those we now see. Examples are no where preferred before Laws, except among Men only; and then too, only in disorderly and ill managed Governments; because it cannot sometimes be otherwise, without bringing the State to utter Ruin. They are forced to proceed by this Rule, *The more are guilty the fewer punished.* But the Gospel hath told us, that our Maker takes other measures, and that with Him, *many are called but few are chosen.* He calls all to Happiness, but he chooses those only who come to him, those Few that are worthy. So that a Man must either renounce Christianity, or he must make the Laws of God, and not the Practice of Men, the Standard of his Duty.

Our Saviour was well aware this would be the Case, when he declared it easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Not that Riches damn Men infallibly, for an Excellent good use may be made of them; but because they are usually converted to ill purposes; and Men are so

blinded, either by Custom, or by ill Examples, that very few Rich Men make a good use of them; and very few such will suffer themselves to be convinced or cured of their Errors. It must be confess, both, that few Rich Men are Liberal, and that few Liberal Men are Rich. This was observed by a Heathen Philosopher in

<sup>†</sup> Aristot. Eth. Lib. iv. c. 2. his Eথিক্স, † where he says, “ son to be Rich, because he de-  
“ lights more to give, than to receive, or to  
“ keep what he hath ; for he loves not Riches  
“ for their own sakes, but values them only  
“ as a means of doing Good. Hence Men com-  
“ monly complain of Fortune, because they  
“ have least who deserve most. But this is not  
“ the Effect of Choice ; for no Man can be Rich,  
“ who is not careful to gather, and to save.

The same Author makes it one Quality of a *Liberal Man*, not to be over Sollicitous for his own Interest. By which he means, that a Liberal Man is content to freighten himself, that he may assist others. This was the Heathen Notion, and it is much more the Christian. We have reason to fear, that many Heathens will rise up in Judgment against the Christians, and Condemn those who have been better taught, but practise less in this point than they. It is however but too true, that few Rich Men can say as *Pliny* did of one of his Friends in a

\* Plin. Epist. L. ii. Ep. 4. Letter to his Daughter. \* “ In your Fathers Life time, when you were Married, I gave him a hundred

" hundred thousand Sisterces to Match you off.  
 " Besides this Sum which your Father promised  
 " to repay, you have a Pledge of my kindness  
 " in these matters. You may depend upon it,  
 " if you consult the Credit of your deceased  
 " Father, (that is, by paying his Debts, and ad-  
 " ministering upon his Effects,) and to engage  
 " you to this, not by promises only, but by  
 " real proofs, I freely release all that your Fa-  
 " ther owed me. Do not apprehend this Li-  
 " berality any Burden to me. My Estate is not  
 " great, my Post engages me in great Expen-  
 " ces, my Income from my Land is small and  
 " uncertain; But my good Husbandry makes  
 " amends for all this, and this is the Fund of  
 " my Liberality. But yet I must be careful  
 " not to draw it dry by being too lavish. *Quod*  
*cessat ex redditu, frugalitate suppletur, ex qua*  
*velut à fonte Liberalitas nostra decurrit. Qua-*  
*tamen ita temperanda est, ne nimia profusione in-*  
*arescat.* But I will present my Reader with  
 another much nobler instance of this Virtue.  
 In the War with *Hannibal*, *Fabius Maximus*  
 had agreed with that General, for the release  
 of some *Roman* Soldiers, not doubting but the  
 Senate would pay their Ransom. When this  
 could not be obtained, instead of leaving these  
 Men in *Hannibal's* hands, he sent his Son to  
*Rome*, to sell the only Farm he had, consisting  
 of Seven Acres; and with that Money he Re-  
 deemed the Prisoners. "Choosing rather, says  
 \* the \* Author, to lose his whole \* Valer. Max.  
 " Estate, than to suffer the scan- l. iv. c. 8. Ex. 1.

"dal of such Inhumanity to lye upon his Coun-  
 "try. Which is so much the more commen-  
 "dable, because it is a greater Argument of  
 "Generosity to do things beyond one's power ;  
 "than to do no more than a Man can easily  
 "dispense with. This is a very proper and excel-  
 "lent Reflection ; and this manner of expressing  
 it hath great affinity with that description  
 which St. Paul gives of the Christians Liberality  
 in Macedonia.

But what Character would *Valerius Maximus*  
 have thought Magnificent enough, for those who  
 Sold themselves to Redeem others, (whom they  
 thought incapable of enduring the hardships of  
 Slavery,) at the Expence of their own Liberty ?

\* *I Ep. ad Corin-*  
*rinth. c. I.v.* And yet \* St. Clement tells us of  
 some Primitive Christians who did  
 grudge even thus much. And

somewhat of this kind is related too of St. †  
*Paulinus of Nola.* But it is to little  
 purpose, I am afraid, to set Examples  
 of such an Heroick Virtue before the  
 Age we live in. It were well, if Men now could  
 be perswaded to give so much out of their E-  
 states, as might be spared, without any sensi-  
 ble diminution or great inconvenience to them-  
 selves.

IV. A Fourth Qualification, necessary to be  
 observed in our Liberality, is the manner how  
 we give. It should be done with Cheapfulness,  
 and so, that the Receiver shall have no reason  
 to suspect, that we look upon our Gift as a Debt  
 upon him. When a Man gives by constraint,

† *Baron. ad*  
*Ann. 431.*

as it were, with a sort of grumbling and reproach, he puts People out of Countenance; and, whatever their Wants are, makes it more tolerable to receive nothing, than to receive it after such an upbraiding manner.

" Let us give (says the \* Heathen  
" Philosopher) with the same Spi.  
" rit and Air with which we  
" would be glad to receive, *Sic domus, quem-*  
" *admodum vellemus accipere.*

\* Senec. de Bu-  
nef. l. ii. c. 1.

This deserves the more enlargement, because it is one of the most essential Points of true Liberality. To convince Men that we give upon a Principle of Generosity, it is requisite, that we prevent the Requests of those that need our Assistance. We need only know their Wants; these of themselves speak loud enough in the Ears of a Liberal Man, and they who hear not this Voice, are usually deaf to the most pressing Importunities. They that are not affected with a sad Object of Poverty, when they see it before their Eyes, are commonly proof against all Complaints.

If we meet with a Man upon the Road, wounded and speechless through loss of Blood, is it fit we stay till he have recovered his Tongue, before we bind up his Wounds, and contribute to his Recovery? Does not his distress speak for it self sufficiently? The Case is the same with Want of any kind: And we should be the more forward in our Relief, because generally, they who deserve it best, are most modest and backward in asking it. The shame

of owning a Man's Poverty; the fear of being troublesome to those whom he wishes he were in a Condition to serve; the concern of a generous Spirit, when he must be looked down upon from above, and run the risque of being denied; These are more than sufficient Reasons for saving such the shame and trouble of asking.

Seneca hath represented this matter wonderfully well, in the beginning of his Second Book *De Beneficiis*. And it is fit some Passages should be transcribed from thence, to put those who pretend to *Christian Charity* to the blush, when they find how far the *Pagans* out-did them in Generosity. "No good Offices (says he) are more agreeable, than those which are speedy and unexpected, and are only delayed by the Modesty of the Receivers. That is the most excellent Liberality, which gets the start of People's desires; that the next best, which follows them close at the heels. It is better to do good unasked, because a Man of Spirit cannot ask without blushing and hesitation; and when we save him this uneasiness we add greatly to the obligation. *Gratissima sunt Beneficia parata, facile occurrentia; ubi nulla mora fuit, nisi in accipientis verecundia.* Primum est antecedere desiderium cuiusq;; proximum sequi; quia cum homini ex probo ad rogandum os concurrat, & susfundatur rubore; Qui hoc tormentum remittit, multiplicat munus suum. What can be more beautiful, than that passage which follows presently

sently after? "I beg you," says he, is a hard  
 "word, never to be spoke without Faultering and Shame. We  
 "should therefore spare this to a Friend, or to  
 "any whom we would make so, by our Kindness. He gives late, who gives immediately  
 "upon asking. We should guess at the Desires of  
 "those in Want, and when we have found them,  
 "we should ease them of the hard Necessity  
 "of asking. *Molestum verbum est, onerosum &*  
*demissu vultu dicendum, Rogo.* *Hujus facienda*  
*est gratia Amico, & cuicunque, quem amisum*  
*promerendis facturus. Properet licet, sero be-*  
*nificium dedit, qui roganti dedit. Ideo divinan-*  
*da cuiusque Voluntas, & cum intellecta est, ne-*  
*cessitate gravissimâ rogandi libranda est.* "He  
 "observes excellently well, that the Kindness  
 "which could not be had without  
 "asking, did not come freely; it is  
 "partly paid for; for a Man buys nothing dearer,  
 "than that which costs him Importunity.  
*Non tulit gratis, qui cum rogasset accepit. Nulla*  
*res obariis constat, quam qua precibus empta est.*

It is observable, that what hath been alledged here, concerning the Duty of being beforehand with the Requests of them that need our Liberality, supposes such an effectual Prevention, as actually gives, and not barely offers the Assistance we are in a Condition to afford them. It is oftentimes as hard to accept a Kindness, when offer'd, as it would be to request it. Because one may fear that the Offer is a Matter of Ceremony and Form, and

that the Man would not be well pleased to be taken at his word. And certain it is, that Men often make Proffers, in hopes that they will be refused. Which is very evident, by one sort of Practice, exceeding common with the false pretenders to Liberality. That I mean of declaring some time before what they intend to do, and so giving Men an Opportunity of a civil Refusal. Which they are very secure of, where they do not meet with Meanness of Spirit, or extreme Necessity. Hence they lay hold upon the least word, that looks like a declining to accept their Kindness, and presently drop the thing. Sometimes they make suchaulkwardCompliments are made; and so instead of obliging, give Offence by this false shew of Liberality. The truly liberal Person does not prevent those in Want by Promises and Professions, he does not ask whether he shall do any thing for them; but he does it instantly, leaves no room for Refusal, and gives what the Person shall not think it beneath him to accept.

But in regard we cannot always guess at the hard Circumstances of a worthy Man, unless he acquaint us with them. As soon as ever he hath let us into this Knowledge, we shall do well to interrupt him, and save the trouble of spending more Time and Pains in Imploring our Assistance. Those that deserve our Kindness, when constrained to ask it, usually begin with distant and general Expressions, which

which yet they who are well disposed, very easily understand. But hard-hearted Peop'e pretend themselves always in the dark ; and when they have forced Men to speak so plain, that they cannot pretend Ignorance any longer, they answer them in formal Terms of Civility, more disoblaging than a flat Denial. So long as they can shelter themselves under a Pretence of not knowing what it is you would be at, they are ready to do whatever you would have them; but when once they are beaten off from that Refuge, then they are sorry it is not in their Power, and you must apply your self some where else.

*Seneca* had infinitely juster and more exalted Notions of Liberality, than these dissembling pitiful spirited Wretches ; for he is of Opinion, that "if we have not been able to prevent those that need our Succour, we should at least interrupt their Requests; that we may not seem to have been intreated. As soon as ever we understand their Wishes, we should immediately promise, and by our eager hast convince them, that could we have gues'd their Occasions, they should not have been put upon asking. *Si non contingit prævenire, rogantis verba intercidamus, ne rogati videamur; sed certiores facti statim promittamus; facturosque nos etiam, antequam interpellaremur, ipsa festinatione approbemus.*

The same Philosopher warns us against another thing, which discovers the Counterfeit from true Liberality. Which is Men's

I s. being

being ready to promise, but as slow in performance, as possibly they can. "Nothing is more grievous, says he, than to ask what a Man hath obtained already. A Man should do what he can do upon the spot. "Nihil est acerbius, quam ubi quoque cum impetrasti,  
 Cap. iv. "rogandum est. Representanda, sunt  
 "beneficia. He tells you there is  
 "nothing more barbarous, than the keeping  
 "Men in Suspence; That some Men had rather  
 Cap. v. be put out of all Hopes presently,  
 than made to wait, and drawn onto  
 a long day. Nihil aque amarum, quam di-  
 pendere. Equiore guidam animo ferunt præcidi-  
 spem suam, quam trahi. "Some are of so diloblig-  
 "ing a Temper, as to do nothing quickly, and  
 "at once; their Injuries come speedily, but  
 "their Kindnesses very leisurely. Nihil con-  
 fessim, nihil semel faciunt; Injuria illorum præ-  
 cipites, lenta beneficia sunt. But "Beneficence  
 "quickens its pace, and he that does good  
 "willingly, does it speedily. He that delayed  
 "and drilled his Friend on in tedious Expecta-  
 "tion, did not act with a good Will. He hath  
 "by this means lost two very considerable  
 "things; Time, and the Evidence of acting  
 "like a Friend. He would take time to oblige,  
 "that is, he was loath to do it at all. Omnis  
 benignitas properat, & proprium est libenter  
 facientis, citè facere. Qui tardè & diem de die  
 extrahens profuit, non ex animo fecit. Ita res  
 duas perdidit, & tempus, & argumentum amica  
 voluntatis. Tarde velle nolentis est.

Besides,

Besides, the manner of giving is a sensible demonstration of Liberality; for the very Countenance discovers whether a Man gave with Pleasure. The Gay and Pleased Look of the Liberal, shews that he acted with his own Inclination, and a heavy dissatisfied look as plainly confesses Unwillingness and Constraint; and the doing a thing meerly for the shame of not doing it. This may likewise be collected from a Man's Discourse at such a time, in which true Liberality differs exceedingly from the Dissembled. "We should give good Words "with our good Deeds, says *Seneca*, and "recommend our Bounty by engaging Expressions. So that he, whom we oblige, should "blame himself for not asking sooner. Upon "this occasion it will do well to mingle some "kind Reproofs and Complaints; as I am "concerned that you should want my Assistance "so long without letting me know it, and that "you asked me as if you feared a denial, or that "you would apply to any but my self. I think "my self very happy that you give me an "Opportunity of shewing my Disposition to "serve you. Hereafter you may command "any thing you want. For once I forgive you "this Modesty, but pray lay aside such Reserve "for the future. *Quanto melius adjicere bona  
verba rebus bonis, & predicatione humana benignaque  
commendare qua præstes, ut ille se castiget,  
qui tardior in rogando fuit? Adjicias licet familiiarum querelam: Ira scortibi, quod cum aliquid  
desiderasses, non olim scire me voluisti, quod tam  
diligente*

diligenter rogasti; quod quenquam adhibuisti:  
 Ego vero gratulator mihi, quod experiri animum  
 meum libuit; postea quicquid desiderabis tuo jure  
 exiges. Semel rusticitati tuae ignoscitur. Few  
 Men indeed know how to give in so obliging a  
 way as this. "Most People turn ones Stomach  
 "against their Favors, by the Words and  
 "haughty Disdain that attends them. They  
 "talk and act so scornfully, that a Man thinks  
 "the obtaining his Request a bad Bargain.  
*Plerique beneficia asperitate verborum & superciliositate odiam adducunt; ex sermone usi, ex superbia, ut impetrasse paeniteat.* Others again mingle  
 Censures and Reproaches with their Kind-  
 nesses, and lose all the Merit of them this way.  
*A Bit and a Knock,* according to the *English*  
 Proverb, which *Seneca* likewise forbids; "To  
 "chide a Man when you are just doing him a  
 "good Office, is great Folly. Nothing should  
 "be mingled with Favours to sour, and render  
 "them unacceptable. If a Man deserve Re-  
 "proof, some other time should be taken  
*Corripere cum cui cum maximo aliquid prastes, dementia est; & inserere contumeliam meritio.*  
*Non sunt exasperanda beneficia, nec quidquam illis triste miscendum.* Si quid erit, de quo velis ad-  
 monere, aliud tempus eligito. But this Max'm is  
 not peculiar to *Seneca*; St. Paul's Direction is  
 much to the same purpose. Let  
 2 Cor. ix. every man do as he is disposed in his  
 heart; not grudgingly, or of neces-  
 sity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. All the  
 Actions that proceed from a Principle of Vir-  
 tue,

tue, and the Habit of a resolved and confirmed Mind, are done with Pleasure and great Alacrity ; so that a Man cannot but give chearfully, when he does indeed give Liberally. Nay, it would be some torment to him not to give, or to find himself unable to do it.

By this we are taught what Judgment to make of them, who offer Kindnesses with a very ill Grace ; for if even they who give Indecently are to be blamed ; what shall we say of them, who never give at all, and when they proffer, are afraid of nothing more than being taken at their Word ?

There is yet one Caution more relating to this Particular, which is, that Men ought upon several Accounts, rather to give in private than publickly. But since this extends to some certain Cases only, I shall lay down the Principal Motives to it, lest otherwise publick Liberality should be defrauded of its just Praises. Now since the proper Inducement to the Practice of Virtue, is not that we may attract the Praise of Men, but that we may answer the Ends, for which God made us, and placed us in civil Society ; 'Tis plain, that Reputation ought not to be Men's aim in their Acts of Liberality. They that proceed upon this View, have not Virtue, but Glory and Approbation ; and if these could be compassed by the quite contrary Methods, would be as Zealous in the Practice of them. These Men have no Virtues, but such as are Creditable and in Fashion. Applause  
is

is their Idol, and therefore, as they do no good, so they boggle at no ill, which is not seen. Such were the Jews, whom Christ forbids us to imitate; *When thou dost thine alms, do not*

*Matth. vi. sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in 2. the streets, that ye may have the*

*praise of Men.* For the better avoiding this Extreme, our Lord orders his Disciples rather to give privately; but that is done purely in opposition to that Hypocrisie, so common among the Pharisees. *Take heed that ye do not*

*V. 1. 3. your alms before men to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. And when thou dost thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth: That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.* Now it is sure, that the Charity and Liberality exercised after this manner, cannot be confounded with the empty Form and Pretence of Charity and Liberality; and our Lord therefore directs it, that its Secrecy might clear it of Insincerity.

Upon the same account the Philosophers blamed that Liberality, which proceeds from Ostentation. "We may observe some, (says "Tully) doing a great many things, not so "much out of any Generosity in their Nature, "as for the Credit of doing them, and to be "thought Generous. These are the Effect of "Vanity, not of good Inclination. But this "acting the part of a Liberal Man, favors "much

" much more of a vain Humor, than of Virtue, or any commendable Principle. *Videre etiam licet plerosque non tam naturâ liberales, quam quadam gloriâ ductos ut benefici videantur, facere multa: qua proficisci ab ostentatione magis, quam à voluntate videantur. Talis autem simulatio vanitatis est conjunctior, quam aut liberalitati aut honestatis.*

Since the End of giving is not only to profit, but to please and gratifie the Persons to whom we give; this is a good Reason for making our Gifts private, because the doing it openly might put the Receivers too much out of Countenance. For Instance; It often happens, that Men of good Families are straitned extremely in their Fortunes, and cannot bear to ask Relief publickly; nay, scarcely to accept Relief so, without great Shame and Concern. And therefore mere Humanity obliges one to deliver them from this Uneasiness, and to conceal our Kindness even from themselves.

Now there are two ways of doing this. One is, giving by another Hand, and so, that they who receive it may not be sensible from whence it comes. "Thus the Philosopher *Arceſtas* is said to Visit his Friend *Apolies*, who lay sick at *Chios*, and at the same time was excessively Poor, but would not make his Condition known, *Arceſtas* pretended to raise his Pillow, and privately dropped a Purse of twenty *Drachmes* behind

Plutarch  
*Art of di-  
ſtinguishing  
between a  
Flatterer and  
a Friend.*

" hind it, and then went away, without taking  
 " any notice of what he had done. *Apelles*  
 " his Nurse, when she came to make the Bed,  
 " found the Purse, which when *Apelles* saw,  
 " he smiled, and said, This was one of *Arceſi-*  
 " *lus* his dexterous turns. *Seneca* reflects very  
 " handsomly upon this Story ; " What ? you'll  
 " say, shall a Man be kept in Ignorance, whom  
 " he is obliged to ? I answer ; First, if it be  
 " for his Advantage not to know it, this adds  
 " to the Obligation. But, Secondly, I will do  
 " more for him, I will take another way of  
 " Assisting him, which may discover his Be-  
 " nefactor. Nay, lastly, though he does not  
 " know the Giver, yet I do. *Quid ergo ?*  
 " *Ille nesciet à quo acceperit ? Primum nesciat,*  
*si hoc ipsum beneficii pars est ; deinde multa alia*  
*faciam, multa tribuam, per quae intelligat &*  
*illius auctorem. Denique ille nesciet accepisse,*  
*ego sciam me dedisse.* " But this is a poor Re-  
 " turn, it is indeed, if you put your Favours  
 " out to Interest ; but if giving be your design,  
 " you must contrive to do it in that way, which  
 " is best for the Receiver. You will desire no  
 " Witness besides your own Breast. If you  
 " do, you do not delight in the doing Good,  
 " but in the being known to have done it.  
*Parum est, inquis ; Parum, si senerare cogitas ;*  
 sed si dares, quo genere accipienti maxime profun-  
 turum erit, dabis : contentus eris te teste. *Alio-*  
*quin non benefacere delectat, sed videri benefecisse.*  
 The rest may be seen in that Author. Whom  
 yet I copy with delight, and insert his own O-  
 riginal

riginal Expressions, because I think no rendering Beautiful and Significant enough for them. But there is *another* way of giving, without putting the Receiver out of Countenance. And this is by finding out somewhat for him to do, that so we may express our Liberality, not so much by way of Present, as by way of Recompence for his Trouble. We may thus consider his Pains above their strict worth, and he may receive our Generosity without blushing. This is a Course very proper toward those whom we employ in Labours of the Mind or Body; which require Application and Diligence. For these Services ought always to be considered, and let the Proportion be what it will, it hath the Face of a Reward, and not of a Charity. Though indeed few Acts of Charity are more truly such, or better contrived, than those which put a Man well Educated into a Way of getting his Livelihood by his Labour, and take care at the same time that he do not get it upon hard Terms. They that loiter about, and Beg, deserve to be shut up to hard Meat; but they who would fain be employed, and desire no more than to live by their Labour, deserve to be Assisted; because they are Serviceable to the Publick, to the utmost of their Power. If their Work will not maintain them according to their Condition, they that set them on Work, should encourage and help them out. But alas! The Rich commonly go a contrary Course, and take unreasonable Advantage of People's extreme Necessit-

Necessity, when they ask to be employed. They see them ready to perish, and willing to accept any Terms, rather than abandon themselves to Beggary ; and they think any price, or way enough to offer these poor laborious Wretches ; nay, they think they oblige them when they employ them at Under-rates. These Men are so far from giving in secret, that they grind the Faces of the Poor openly ; and all you can say of Chariry or Liberality, to Persons in extreme Distress is absolutely lost upon them.

But to return to the manner of Giving, Seneca lays down a Rule, instructing us, when it is our Duty to give publickly. "The Masters of Wisdom, he says, all agree in this ; that some good Offices ought to be publick, and some private. Those should be publick, the receiving whereof is Creditable ; as Donatives in War, Honours, and whatever is more valuable, by being more generally known. But then such as do not raise a Man's Character, but relieve his Weaknesses, or his Wants, or cover his Shame only, these should be managed with Secrecy.

Cap. ix. *Principiant omnes auctores sapientia, quædam beneficia palam danda, quædam secreta. Palam, quæ consequi gloriosum est, ut militaria dona & honores, & quicquid aliud notitia pulchrius fit. Rursus, quæ non producunt, nec honestiorem faciunt, sed occurruunt infirmitati, egestati, ignorantia, taci dandæ sunt.* This Rule is chiefly calculated for Princes, and Persons of the first

Qua-

Quality, who have it in their Power to bestow such Favours, as may raise those out of the Extremity of Distress, whom they shall think worthy of their Relief. These Persons need not decline giving publickly, for fear of Ostentation; because, being in publick Posts themselves, and nicely observed by all the World, it is the greatest Scandal that can happen to them, and a thing of most pernicious Example to others for their Liberality not to be generally seen and known. There is not any Law of God or Man, which obliges them to be strait-handed in publick, or to deny that Relief before Men, which they design to bestow in secret afterwards; without letting People know whom the Persons so Relieved are beholding to. The only Case, in which this Management can be excused, is when the Presents are not answerable to the Quality of the Giver. If Princes will give no more than private Men, then indeed they are in the right to conceal their Gifts. But when they are Liberal in proportion to what should be expected from that high Station and Power, then they do well to set Examples to the lower World, and to convince their People, how infinite an Esteem they have for this useful Virtue of Liberality.

The same Measures ought to be taken by private Persons, as oft as the not giving in publick, will draw upon them the Imputation of Covetousness, and encourage others to hold

hold their Hand, after their Example. A Man indeed ought not Industriously to proclaim and make a Show of his Liberality, nor indeed of any good Action ; but no more ought he affect Hard-heartedness, and Niggardliness in Publick, for fear of having Vanity laid to his Charge by being otherwise.

V. The last Character of Liberality, concerns our Behaviour after the Exercise of it. This Discovers whether a Man have proceeded upon a true Principle of Beneficence, and from a Pleasure in doing good to those of the same Nature with himself, or out of Ostentation. The *First* Rule to be observed upon this Occasion is, not to be Rigorous in requiring Thanks from the Persons obliged by us, nor so much as to suffer the Payment of them in any great Measure. For, if we are concerned at not being thanked, or pleased with fulsom Complements, it argues a desire of Praise to have lain at the bottom of our Actions. The truly Liberal Man thinks himself sufficiently paid by the Satisfaction of having done what became him. Not to mention at present the Recompence he may depend upon from our great Benefactor in Heaven, who never fails to make all such amends, as imitate the Freedom of his Bounty. He stops their Acknowledgments in the middle ; he declares he hath done less than he could wish, and than they who have been obliged by him, deserve. By this engaging manner, he enhances the value  
of

of his Kindness. "How Pleasant, how Grateful, how Obliging a thing is it to see a Man give, and not bear to be thanked for giving? *Quām dulce, quām pretiosum est, si gratias sibi agi non possumus est, qui dedit!* Cap. vi.

A Second Mark of true Liberality, is seldom to mention the Good it hath done, and in some sort to make the favour fresh by forgetting it. As he that hath received a Kindness should never forget or cease to publish it; so he that hath done one should no more speak of it, than if he knew of no such thing. "This is the Rule of good turns, The Giver should forget Cap. x. "what he hath Given; and the Receiver should always remember what he hath Received. *Hac beneficii inter duas Lex est. Alter statim debet oblivisci dati: Alter accepti nunquam.* But they that do good only to be talked of, never let any occasion slip of making their own Panegyrick. If the Persons obliged by them fail in their Complements, they take care to refresh their Memory often, and sometime even reproach their Insensibility.

Seneca says, that a Friend of *Augus-* Cap. xi.  
*tus* having saved a Man's Life, during the Propscription of the Triumvirate, told him of it so often, that the other at last could not forbear crying out; *For God's sake deliver me up to Caesar. How long must I hear those upbraiding words, You owe your Life to me?* Upon which Passage Seneca Paraphraseth thus. "If  
"you

"you would let me remember it when I please,  
 "I would own my Life your Gift; but if I  
 "must remember it whenever you please, this  
 "very thing is Death to me. If you prefer-  
 "ved me only that you might have a Man  
 "to carry about, and shew for one of your  
 "own saving, I am not at all obliged to you.  
 "When do you intend to leave off carrying me  
 "about for a Sight? Must I never be allowed  
 "to forget my ill Fortune? *Istud si meo arbi-*  
*trio memini, Vita est; si tno, mors est. Nibil tibi*  
*debo, si me servasti, ut haberet quem ostenderes.*  
*Quousque me circumducis? Quonsg; oblivisci for-*  
*tuna mea non sinis?* After which he lays down  
 these Directions, pertinent to the matter now  
 in hand. "We should not make our Kindnes-  
 "ses the subject of Conversation. He that  
 "rubs up the Man he hath obliged, calls his  
 "Favour in again. He must not press, or re-  
 "fresh his Memory, except by some repeated  
 "Instance of Liberality. We should not talk  
 "of it to others. Let the Benefactor be silent,  
 "and let the Person obliged by him be left to  
 "declare his Engagements. Else that answer  
 "will be very proper, which a certain Person  
 "gave to a Man boasting how much he had  
 "done for him. *Will you (says he) have the Confi-*  
*dence to pretend, that I have not discharged*  
*"that Obligation?* When I pray? (said he) Over  
 "and over (replied the other) even as often,  
 "and in as many places as you have bragged of it.  
 "What need is there of mentioning these  
 "things?

"things? Why should you take another Man's  
 "Duty upon your self? There is one that can  
 "do this much more decently than you. And  
 "every time he speaks, your silence will be  
 "commended. I refer my Reader to the Au-  
 thor for the Original Expressions; where he  
 will find a great deal which it will not consist  
 with my intended brevity to transplant into  
 this Treatise.

After this I need not say, that it is a *Third*  
 Mark of true Generosity, not to require any  
 returns, except a Man be driven to such Cir-  
 cumstances as to stand in great need of them.  
 For otherwise, this is not Liberality, but Traf-  
 fick and Exchange.

And hence arises a *Fourth* Character of a  
 truly Liberal Mind, which is, Never to repent  
 of the Good we have done, nor to be dissatisfied  
 with the discharge of that Duty God and Na-  
 ture require of us, though it should happen  
 that we are paid with great Ingratitude; and  
 ingrateful behaviour be in it self so very shock-  
 ing a thing. The only cause for dissatisfaction  
 in this case, is the injury such People do to  
 themselves; and a Concern to see them in a  
 Condition of Mind, so very displeasing to God,  
 and so justly detested by Men. One proof of  
 this is the pains taken by truly Liberal Persons  
 to reduce these Wretches, and make them  
 more sensible by new Favours, if they stand  
 in need of such; and the forbearing all re-  
 proaches, or any other way tempting them  
 to

to suspect, that they are sorry for the good Offices done to them formerly. Though such have often met with base returns, they still persist in their Liberality; and had rather run the risque of being mistaken in a Thousand unthankful Receivers, than omit doing good to One deserving Person. This the nearest approach that Mortals can possibly make, to Him, whose *Mercies are over all his Works*; though much the greatest part of his Creatures never thank him as they ought.

"If you  
"would be like God, do good even to the un-  
"thankful. The Sun rises upon the Evil as  
"well as the Good; and the Seas are as open  
"to Pirates, as to those that Sail with an ho-

*"nest and useful Design. Si Deo;*  
Sen. L. iv. *imitaris da & ingratis Beneficium.*  
C. 26. *Nam & secleratis Sol oritur; & Pi-*

*ratis patent maria.* I could produce infinite passages of the same Author, but it is time to draw to a Conclusion, and my Reader will be better entertained by reading them in the Original. It may perhaps be objected, that I have only quoted a Stoick, whose Virtue at the bottom was Vanity. But I answer, That if to his Precepts we add two things, which he speaks not of, great Improvement may be made of his Book. The *One* is, that God hath Commanded us to apply our Minds to Virtue; the *Other*, that he will reward all those who do so with Eternal Happiness. Take but these two Principles along with you, and Seneca will be one

one of the best Books any Man can study. Men may, if they please, impute his Virtue to Vanity, and charge him with being guilty of it upon some occasions. I am content they should; provided they give evidence of as good Notions of their own, upon a Principle of Christianity; and act as regularly and as generously as He did upon some other occasions. Let them urge, if they think fit, that he did not Practise his own Doctrine; provided a due sense of God's infinite Goodness, and the hope of immortal Happiness, prevail with them to live up to what *Seneca* taught. But nothing can be more ridiculous, than to betray Nations more mean than those of Pagans, to be more Covetous, or more Proud and more Profuse than they; and at the same time to fall foul upon them, for Faults as much less than Ours, as our Means and Advantages are greater than Theirs.

## C H A P. XIII.

*The Conclusion of this Discourse. Men's Management of themselves in the business of Religion compared with theirs who put into Lotteries.*

*From M. Pascal.*

**A**fter so long a Digression upon Liberality, it is fit we come back to *Lotteries* once more, before we take our leave. These give a hint to one Reflection, which is perhaps of at least as great Concern, and as seasonable to some sort of Persons as all that hath been said of the true use that should be made of the Profits arising from thence, and the true nature of Liberality. The Scepticks and Unbelievers, who blame none that put in to Lotteries, and who often put in themselves, would do well to proceed prudently, and act thus too with regard to the Promises of another Life, which

*Religion proposes to us. Mr. Pascal Pensées. Ch.vii.*

hath managed this Argument very ingeniously, and I cannot conclude my Book better, than by giving you his Thoughts in his own words. “ It is certain, that either “ there is a God, or there is None. There “ can be no *Medium*. But which side of the “ Disjunction shall we incline to? Reason, you “ pretend, can determine nothing in the matter.

“ There

" There is a great Gulf betwixt. It is like a Play  
 " at an infinite distance, where it will be either  
 " Cross or Pile. What will you bett? By  
 " Reason (you say) you can affirm neither;  
 " by Reason too you can deny neither.

" Do not then find fault with them for  
 " choosing wrong, who have chosen their side  
 " already; for you cannot be sure that they  
 " have chosen amiss. No (say you) I do not  
 " blame them for choosing amiss, but for  
 " choosing at all. For he that takes *Cross* and  
 " he that takes *Pile* are both in fault; the true  
 " way had been not to bett at all.

" Nay, but you must bett on some side, you  
 " cannot help it. You are drawn in; and,  
 " Not to bett that *God is*, is in effect to bett  
 " that he *is not*. Which side will you take  
 " now? Let us compute the Gain and the  
 " Loss that can come by taking that side, that  
 " *God is*. If you win, you win all; but if you  
 " lose, you lose nothing. Lay then that *He is*,  
 " and make no demur. Well I must lay; but  
 " perhaps I venture too much. Let that be  
 " considered then. Admitting it to be an e-  
 " qual Chance, whether you win or lose;  
 " though you could win no more than two  
 " Lives for one, it were certainly prudence to  
 " lay. But if you had a possibility of winning  
 " ten, it were very unwise not to venture your  
 " Life, where ten may be got for one, and  
 " where you have as fair a Chance for Win-  
 " ning as for Losing. But in this Case you

"may win an infinite number of Lives, and  
"those too infinitely Happy, and you are as  
"likely to win these as not: And what you  
"stake is so inconsiderable in Value, and so  
"short in duration, that it is monstrously  
"foolish not to venture it all upon this  
"Occasion.

"It is to no purpose to object, that the  
"Gain is uncertain, but the Hazard you run  
"certain; and that the infinite distance which  
"there is between the Certainty you venture,  
"and the Uncertainty of that which you may  
"win, is a Consideration equivalent to the  
"finite Good, which you certainly risque;  
"and the infinite Good which you are not  
"certain of winning. This Matter is far o-  
"therwise. Every Man that plays, ventures  
"a Certainty which is his, for an Uncer-  
"tainty which only may be his. And yet  
"he ventures a certain *Finite*, in hopes to  
"win an uncertain *Finite*, without being  
"thought to act unreasonably. So that here  
"is not an infinite distance between the  
"Certainty of the Venture, and the Un-  
"certainty of the Gain. This is not rightly  
"computed. I allow indeed, that there is  
"an infinite distance between the Certainty  
"of winning, and the Certainty of loosing.  
"But the Uncertainty is proportionate to  
"the Certainty of that which we stake ac-  
"cording to the Proportion of the Chances  
"for winning and losing. So that if the  
"number

" number of Chances be equal on either  
 " side, the Party plays *Equal* against *Equal*,  
 " and then the Certainty of what he ven-  
 " tures, is so far from being infinitely Dis-  
 " proportionate, that it is exactly equal to  
 " the Uncertainty of the Gain. Thus our  
 " Proposition is of infinite Force, where a  
 " Man hath really a Finite to venture, and  
 " an Infinite to win; and all this at a  
 " Play, where he stands every whit as fair  
 " for winning as losing. This is plain De-  
 " monstration, and if Men be capable of  
 " understanding any Truths, they must needs  
 " comprehend this.

" I own (say you again) that they who  
 " live in a good hope of Salvation, are in  
 " a very comfortable State; but then there  
 " is a terrible Counterbalance to damp this,  
 " from the fear of Hell. Very well. But  
 " who, I beseech you hath most cause to  
 " be afraid of Hell? The Man that does  
 " not know or believe there is a Hell, and  
 " is sure to be damned, if there be one;  
 " or he who lives in a certain Perswasion  
 " that there is a Hell, and in hopes of Hea-  
 " ven and Salvation, if there be any such  
 " thing?

" That Man, who had but a Week  
 " to live, and should imagine that the  
 " Believers in this case were not the bet-  
 " ter side, would have utterly lost all  
 " Sense and Judgment. And yet if our  
 " Passions

" Passions did not enslave and impose upon  
 " us, One Week and a hundred Years would  
 " plainly appear to be the same thing, to  
 " Men who must die at one time or o-  
 " ther.

" Besides what Inconvenience shall you  
 " sustain by taking this side of the Betts?  
 " You will be a Man of exact Fidelity and  
 " Honesty, Humility and Meekness, Grati-  
 " tude and Beneficence, Sincerity and Truth.  
 " 'Tis true indeed; you will not abandon  
 " your self to pestilent invenomed Pleasures,  
 " to Vain-Glory, or filthy Delights. But  
 " will there be no other Satisfactions to  
 " make you amends? Yes, I do faithfully  
 " assure you, that you will be a Gainer even  
 " in this Life; and every step you advance  
 " in this way, a new Prospect will open and  
 " discover to you so great a Certainty of  
 " winning hereafter, and such Vanity and  
 " Worthlessness in the Stake you venture,  
 " that you will be sensible at last, that you  
 " have Betted for a certain and an infinite  
 " Profit, and that what you have parted  
 " with to obtain it is a very *Nothing*.

Now though *M. Pascal* do not indeed make use of the word *Lottery* in these Reflections, yet the whole Passage manifestly turns upon the Supposition of some thing very like that. And were the thing necessary, the Thought throughout might with great ease be expressed in Terms, which have a greater Affinity

Affinity to *Lotteries*. But I think it better to conclude all, with this one Admonition, to all those who are of Mr. *Pascal's* side already, and make no doubt of Heaven and another World, and who in this Perswasion, venture, and win in Lotteries, *viz.* That *Liberality and Charity* are absolutely necessary to Entitle them to those blessed Mansions. They who neglect these Duties, do not only run a Risque, but are infallibly certain of being excluded from the Regions of Bliss; and they who make such use of their Advantages, as they ought, (shall according to that Promise of the Gospel) not fail to lay up for themselves a sure and lasting Treasure in *Heaven*.

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